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THE PICTURESQUE HUDSON

CLIFTON JOHNSON



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Yours very truly,

Wm. H. Brewer





A Quiet Evening

THE PICTURESQUE HUDSON

*WRITTEN AND
ILLUSTRATED BY
CLIFTON JOHNSON*

*PICTURESQUE
RIVER SERIES*



THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

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**THE PICTURESQUE
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Introductory Note

IT IS believed that the volumes in this Picturesque Rivers Series are sufficiently comprehensive in their text to make them distinctly valuable as guide books; and at the same time they are compact enough in size not to be burdensome to those who wish to carry them in trunk or bag. There is, of course, no attempt to give a detailed catalog of all the charms of any particular stream, for that could only be done at a sacrifice of readableness. But the more striking features—picturesque, historic, literary, legendary—have received ample attention. A great variety of volumes more or less closely related to the story of each river has been consulted, and many fragments of fact and fancy have been culled from such sources and woven into the text of the present series; but there is also included much which is the result of personal observation, and of contact with chance acquaintances, who furnish to every traveller a great deal of the pleasure and human interest of any particular journey.

The numerous pictures were all made especially for these books with the intent of supplying an attractive summary of each stream's individuality. All in all, the books, both in their literary and pictorial features, are of such a character that they should be of general interest and in a marked degree serviceable to whoever wishes to make a journey beside or on any of the rivers that find place in this series.

The Picturesque Hudson

I


SOME GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

THE springs and tiny rills that are the source of the Hudson are among the central heights of the Adirondacks. Thence the gradually increasing waters flow southward, until at Fort Edward, one hundred and eighty miles from the mouth, they become a well-defined river. But the stream for thirty miles more is narrow, tortuous and rock-obstructed. Then, at Troy, it reaches tidewater, and for the rest of its course is essentially a long arm of the sea, broad, stately and slow and having not a little of the sea's austerity and grandeur. This portion of the river is remarkably free from irregularities. It even lacks tributaries of any considerable size and as a whole presents a fine symmetrical shaft such as no other river in the world can match.

The Hudson is a very large river considering the amount it carries to the sea, for its watershed

is comparatively limited. In fact, the channel of the stream is, for most of the course, a huge trough with a very slight incline through which the current moves most leisurely. Its fall from Albany to New York Bay is only about five feet, and the ordinary progress of the water southward between these points is less than ten miles a day. Each of the two ebb tides in the twenty-four hours will carry a piece of driftwood about a dozen miles down stream, but each of the flood tides carries it back two-thirds of that distance. So a drop of water is three weeks making the journey from Albany to the metropolis.

Some rivers by the volume and force of their current penetrate the sea, but in the case of the Hudson the salt water invades the river channel and meets the fresh water from the mountains nearly half way. There was a time, however, when the river was more aggressive. Its great trough bears evidence of having been worn to its present dimensions by much swifter and mightier currents than now flow through it. Apparently, in the pre-glacial period, this portion of our continent was several hundred feet higher than at present, and the Hudson was the outlet of the Great Lakes, with which it was







The Hudson at Fort Edward

connected by a channel that followed much the same course as does the Mohawk of today. At length the land subsided, and as a result of this and the changes wrought by a huge glacier that crept down from the north, we have the region as it now is. The valley of the Hudson was left partially filled with silt, and nowhere beneath the stream is the mud and clay apparently less than two or three times as deep as the water.

That ancient and grander Hudson belongs to a period hundreds of thousands of years ago, but some of the river's guardian rocks and mountains are far older. The Highlands, for instance, date from the earliest geological era.

The stream is navigable to Troy for large steamers and shipping, and is a great highway of travel and commerce. Vessels from all parts of our seaboard plough its waters. Opposite New York it is from fifty to seventy-five feet deep, and a good depth is maintained nearly to Tarrytown by the scouring force of the tides along the comparatively narrow channel at the foot of the Palisades. Beyond the Palisades, wherever the river is broad, there are usually extensive shallows reaching out from either shore so that long wharves or dredged ap-

4 The Picturesque Hudson

proaches to the landing stages are a necessity. The Federal Government has spent large sums in keeping the channel open, but it appears that even the channel of the lower river is constantly growing shallower. This is said to be due to the reckless scattering of vast quantities of refuse from barges and canal-boats, and the ashes from the numerous steamers. The principal offenders are the men who carry brick. When returning up the river they dump overboard, wherever convenient, the broken bricks rejected from the cargoes carried to New York. The brick barges make up a considerable proportion of the boats in the tows, and as an average of eight tows, each composed of from forty to eighty boats, pass up the Hudson daily, it is easy to realize that the refuse bricks thrown into the water must bulk very large. Not only are they a detriment in themselves, but they arrest much silt that would otherwise be carried out to sea.

Such a river as the Hudson, with a length of over three hundred miles, nearly half of which is open to navigation for large vessels, is a great help to the adjacent region, and this noble waterway has had much to do with making New York the Empire State.

Some General Characteristics 5

In winter nearly the whole extent of the river is closed by ice. North of the Highlands the closure is usually permanent during January and February, and navigation ceases toward the end of November. But the steam ferry-boats continue to run, crushing through the ice as it forms and keeping open a path for themselves. Below the Highlands, in an average winter, the ice does not form from shore to shore, but drifts about in more or less compact floes that lodge here and there for limited periods. Yet sometimes the lower river is solidly ice-bound for weeks together, and even New York Bay has been frozen over.

Ordinarily the ice goes out of the river in March, but never suddenly and tumultuously as in more rapid and fluctuating streams. It starts in a slow, deliberate movement of the whole body of ice. But a few hours suffice to break up the great ice-fields pretty thoroughly.

About the time that the river begins to free itself from its winter fetters, and when its aspect is wildest, the eagles appear. They prowl about among the ice-floes, sometimes alighting on them, sometimes flapping along over the chilly water, looking for fish or other game. Where the eagles are, the crows congregate, and

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hover about to get the leavings of the royal birds' feasts. The eagles give the river a flavor of the wilderness; and really, in spite of the metropolitan villas that dot its shores, and its busy towns and railroads, and the numerous vessels on its waters, it is far from being wholly conquered by civilization. The stream continues as of yore to be a thoroughfare for many of Nature's untamed children. The wild ducks and geese follow it north in spring and south in the autumn. The loon too is often seen on it in his migrations; and seals and otters are numbered among its rarer denizens. Few rivers offer such varied and striking contrasts or present so many points of interest to the leisurely observer. Its beauty is in many respects superlative and the associations that cluster about both its past and present are full of romantic fascination.

"I fancy," says Washington Irving, "I can trace much of what is good and pleasant in my own heterogeneous compound to my early companionship with this glorious river. The Hudson is, in a manner, my first and last love, and after all my wanderings I return to it with a heart-felt preference over all the other rivers in the world. I seem to catch new life as I bathe in its ample billows and inhale the pure breezes of its hills."



A stream in the Catskills

II

A BACKLOOK

MOST people have the impression that the first European to see the river was Henry Hudson, whose name it bears; but as early as 1524, the Florentine navigator, Verrazano, while coasting along the shore of the lately-discovered continent, entered the Bay of New York and ascended the Hudson for some distance. He must have gone at least as far as the Palisades, for he describes the stream as "The River of the Steep Hills."

The next year the captain of a Spanish vessel took notice of the Hudson, and as time went on it was visited by French skippers, some of whom went up to the head of navigation to get furs from the Mohawks, and they built block-houses on Manhattan Island and at Albany. Wars at home, however, presently led to a cessation of French maritime enterprise, and the Hudson was not only abandoned but well-nigh forgotten.

The man to whom the river owes its name was a citizen of London and a warm friend of Captain John Smith. He first won fame by a voyage into the Arctic regions seeking a route to China directly across the North Pole, and though he failed in his main purpose he penetrated the ice-fields farther than any of his predecessors. While wandering on the almost unexplored seas of that time he discovered various of those marvels, of which the ocean anciently had many, and among the rest reported having seen a mermaid. The upper portion of the creature resembled a woman, but when she dove out of view she tossed in the air a "taile like the taile of a porpoise, and speckled like a macrell."

Wonders were expected, and when in 1609 he first saw the Hudson he did not recognize it as a river, but fancied that its broad salt-water channel might afford the short-cut to China for which he was searching. Hitherto he had sailed in English ships, but on this voyage he was in the employ of the Dutch, who as a nation were the most enterprising and intelligent sea rovers and traders of that period, and who owned more ships than all the rest of Europe put together. With his little vessel, the *Half Moon*, manned

by a crew of only eighteen sailors, he had again tried to push through the northern ice-fields. Failing in that he voyaged southward to Newfoundland, and Cape Cod, and even as far as Virginia. Then he returned along the coast exploring it more closely until, early in September, he sounded his way across Sandy Hook bar and anchored. Here he found an abundance of fish, and gazed with delight at the green pleasant shores adorned with "great and tall oaks." The savages in their canoes, made of single hollowed trees, paddled out to visit the vessel, though at first sight they had been suspicious that the white-sailed ship was some strange sea-monster. They were clad in garments of feathers, deerskin and furs, and carried bows accompanied by arrows which were pointed with sharp stones. One evening when a boat from the ship that had been a few miles to the north exploring was on its way back it was attacked by two canoes, containing twenty-six Indians, and a sailor was killed by an arrow.

After a week's loitering below Staten Island, Hudson sailed into New York Bay and proceeded on up the broad river enjoying the fragrance of the wild grapes that came from the shores. The scene as he continued northward

became one of impressive and sober beauty. On the right bank swept the verdure of an almost unbroken forest, while on the left rose the precipitous rocks of the Palisades, and in both directions stretched a land of unknown extent that was full of mysterious possibilities. Hudson sailed on until he was well past the Highlands and had reached the head of navigation within sight of the Catskills. Meanwhile he had been trading with the savages for beans and oysters, Indian corn, pumpkins and tobacco. When he went ashore "the swarthy natives all stood around and sang in their fashion." "They appeared to be a friendly people," he says, but adds that they "have a great propensity to steal, and are exceedingly adroit in carrying away whatever they fancy."

Hudson sent a boat load of his men up the river, and they explored the narrowing stream to beyond the mouth of the Mohawk. On their return he reluctantly concluded that this route did not lead to China, a conclusion in harmony with that of Champlain who the same summer, and on the same quest, had been making his way from the St. Lawrence down through the lake that bears his name and through Lake George. It was then a common belief that the



On the Battery

continent in that latitude was not much wider than Central America. These old mariners never dreamed of the thousands of miles of solid continent ridged with vast mountain ranges that lay between them and their goal.

The prow of the *Half Moon* was at length turned southward. At one place where it stopped the "Master's mate went on land with an old savage, who carried him to his house and made him a good cheere." The mate's entertainer was chief of a tribe consisting of forty men and seventeen women. They were all together in a house "well constructed of oak bark and circular in shape, with an arched roof." A mat of interwoven bulrushes was spread in the wigwam for the visitor, and some food—probably boiled corn-meal—was served in a red wooden bowl, while a hunter was sent to shoot some game. In a short time he returned with a brace of pigeons, which the hospitable savages supplemented by a fat dog killed in haste and skinned with clam shells.

When the Highlands had been left behind the *Half Moon* was becalmed near Stony Point, and the "people of the mountain" came on board and marvelled at the ship and its equipment. One canoe kept hanging under the stern,

and an Indian stole a pillow and two shirts from a cabin window. The mate shot at him and killed him. There was more trouble with the Indians near the north end of Manhattan Island. Two canoes full of savages appeared and commenced an attack with their bows and arrows. The sailors responded with a volley of musketry, and with two discharges from a cannon. Nine of the assailants were killed and the rest hastily got out of range of the death-dealing guns.

One month after entering New York Bay Hudson was back on the open sea and sailed for Holland. But part of his crew were Englishmen and these compelled him to stop at Dartmouth. Before he could get away the King interfered with an order forbidding him to leave the country. So the *Half Moon* was sent on to Amsterdam without him and the following year, still possessed by the South Sea mania, Hudson in command of an English ship sailed again. In June he reached Greenland and keeping on westward presently entered the great bay which has received his name. From November third until early in the succeeding summer the ship was locked in ice at the southern extremity of the bay. After this long delay the crew insisted on returning home. Their food supply was

much diminished and they had scarcely bread enough to last a fortnight, but fish could be caught in considerable quantity and the bold navigator was desirous to push on toward Asia. Three days after leaving winter quarters, however, the sailors mutinied and placed him with his own son and some others who adhered to him in a small boat at the mercy of the waves. His fate was revealed by one of the conspirators when the ship reached Europe, and an expedition was sent from England in quest of the famous mariner, but no trace of him or his companions was ever discovered.

The reports of Hudson's voyage in the *Half Moon* naturally stimulated interest in the country he had explored, and during the years following, a succession of the small, uncouth, but serviceable craft in favor among the commercial adventurers of the period, anchored in the bay below the Isle of Manhattan, so called from the name of a tribe of Indians dwelling in the vicinity. Whether we have adopted the correct form of this name is open to question, for no less than forty-two different spellings of it have been found in the old manuscripts. By 1613 four rude houses had been built on the island, and Captain Christiansen

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was sailing to and fro on all the near waters drumming up Indian customers and getting skins of beaver, otter and mink in exchange for blue glass beads and strips of red cotton.

The following year the ship of Captain Adrian Block was burned in New York Bay. So he established himself on the lower point of Manhattan Island and set about building a new one. He and his comrades were fed by the kindness of the Indians until they had constructed and launched a little vessel of sixteen tons which they called the *Restless*. In this small craft they boldly adventured the untried whirlpools of Hell Gate, and sailed away for Holland through Long Island Sound.

Meantime, a small redoubt had been built on Castle Island, near the present city of Albany, to protect the most advanced Dutch trading-post. But most of the trading was for years carried on in ships and small vessels. Cloth, rum, beads and cheap trinkets, knives, hatchets, awls, hoes and firearms were bartered on the decks of the vessels for beaver skins and other furs. The headquarters for all this traffic was the lower end of Manhattan Island.

As yet the Dutch had only the most slender hold in the new world, and it is a curious fact



Shipping at the Albany wharves

that the river narrowly escaped falling under the sway of the English through the establishment there of the voyagers on the *Mayflower*. In November, 1620, the homeseekers on this vessel, after beating about in the neighborhood of Cape Cod, stood for the southward, "the wind and weather being fair, to find some place about Hudson's River for their habitation. But after they had sailed about half a day they fell among dangerous shoals and roaring breakers, and conceived themselves in great danger, and resolved to bear up again for the Cape."

The first Dutch colony arrived in 1623, and the larger portion of it settled in the vicinity of the future Albany, but eight men were left on the Island of Manhattan. Three years later this island, thirteen miles long, and for the most part two miles broad, was in due form purchased from the Indians for twenty-four dollars worth of beads and ribbons. It was not an extravagant price; but land was a possession that the Indians had in superabundance, and there is no reason to think that they were dissatisfied with the bargain. The future city continued for many years to be no more than a petty village under the walls of Fort Amsterdam.

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The fort was at first simply a block-house encircled by red cedar palisades backed by earthworks. East of it, along the waterside, stretched a line of one-story log cabins with bark roofs, about thirty in number, and these sheltered the greater part of the inhabitants. Nearly all the island outside of the village was primeval wilderness which resounded nightly with the growl of bears, the wail of panthers, and the yelps of wolves, while serpents lurked in the dense underbrush. The fort commanded the southern end of the island, overlooking the reef of rocks afterward filled in and extended to form the Battery. As time went on the log houses gave way to better ones, which, though usually small and for the most part of wood, were apt to have gable ends of small black and yellow bricks brought over from Holland, and often the peak of the front gable was surmounted by a weathercock. The people early had a windmill to grind their grain and another to saw wood, but in 1629, with a population of three hundred, there was neither a minister, nor a schoolmaster. Plainly the citizens had come hither for furs, and few had any intention of making the new world their permanent home.





The battle monument—Washington Heights

By 1641 the place had two thousand inhabitants and was considered "a clever little town." Then began a terrible Indian war which lasted four years and threatened to drive the Dutch from the entire valley.

The town was agitated with fresh alarms in 1652 when war broke out between the Dutch Republic and England. So the fort was repaired and a wall was built across the island at the northern limit of the city. This wall followed the course of what was destined to be one of the world's most famous streets, and a chief center of commerce and finance—that is, Wall Street. The wall consisted in the main of a line of round palisades six inches in diameter, and twelve feet high, with a sloping earthwork on the inner side that rose to a height of four feet.

The city's next taste of war did not, however, come from the English, but from the Indians. On the west side of Broadway, a little above Bowling Green, a burgher named Van Dyck had a comfortable house with its garden and orchard. One September afternoon in 1655 he found an Indian squaw on his premises stealing peaches. Instantly he drew his pistol and killed her. The relations of the whites with the Indians were at the time perfectly

peaceful, but this cruel act wrought a direful change. On September fifteenth, before day-break, while the little town was wrapt in slumber, a swarm of canoes came to the shores of the island bringing almost two thousand Indians from tribes near and far. They thronged through the streets, but at first did no particular harm. Some of the city officials got the sachems to come into the fort for a conference. This resulted in the warriors' embarking in their canoes and paddling over to Governor's Island. But at sundown they returned. A party of them rushed up Broadway to Van Dyck's house and sent an arrow through his heart, and a neighbor who came to the rescue was struck dead with a tomahawk. The citizens turned out in force, armed and ready for battle, and the Indians withdrew across the Hudson where they further vented their wrath by burning Hoboken and Pavonia. Staten Island and other places were later devastated. Within three days they had slain one hundred persons and held as prisoners fully as many more. Numerous cattle were captured or driven away and an immense quantity of grain was burned, and intermittent fighting continued along the Hudson for nearly a decade.

During these troubled times the town on Manhattan Island barely held its own. It was even then a very cosmopolitan place, and nearly a score of different languages were spoken there. In 1699 the population had increased to six thousand. Just before the Revolution the buildings numbered about twenty-five hundred. They were arranged so compactly that the space occupied was no more than a mile in length and half that in breadth. The streets were irregular and were paved with round pebbles. Most of the houses were of brick, many of them had tile roofs, and quaint dormer windows were common. There was still a marked separation between the Dutch and the English residents. Habits of living were primitive, and society was the reverse of intellectual. Manners were agreeably free, conviviality at the table was the fashion, and strong expletives had not gone out of use in conversation.

By 1800 the inhabitants numbered sixty thousand, which included three thousand slaves. The outskirts of the city were then in the neighborhood of the present city hall, and people went for drives in the country above Canal Street. The increase in population was hence-

forth very rapid, and seventy-five years later the million mark was passed.

To return to the early days and a more general survey of affairs in the Hudson Valley it is to be noted that while New York and Albany at the extreme southern and northern ends of the navigable river were the first settlements, other primitive hamlets were started between these two. Nevertheless for a long time the greater part of the river shore was practically untouched by the whites. The inland wilderness sheltered a large Indian population and was the haunt of numerous wild animals, including if we can believe a document of the period, "lions, but they are few; bears, of which there are many; elks, and a great number of deer."

The Netherlands were at this period so prosperous and so liberally governed that very few Dutchmen were inclined to emigrate. Traders came and went but the number of new homes increased very slowly. To meet this difficulty the West India Company granted semi-monarchical powers to patroons, or men of wealth who should establish colonies at their own expense in America. Each patroon had authority to own a tract of land with a frontage of sixteen

miles on one side or the other of any stream whose shores were not yet occupied, and the lots were to run back into the interior as far as circumstances made possible. It was, however, stipulated that the patroons should not settle the land until they had purchased it from the Indians.

The device of granting these large "manors" as they were called, served to plant the country, and fields of rye, wheat, maize and barley began to grow in the forest clearings neighboring the forts, and round about the orchards and gardens of the manor lords, whose rule in their little realms was almost absolute. Thus was the country settled, yet in such a thin and inadequate way, that when once the English chose to forcibly assail the Dutch power it crumbled with slight resistance. Both the Dutch and the French spread the ramifications of their trading companies over a vast territory, and neither was able to withstand the closely-settled agricultural colonies of the English. All parties concerned claimed to have right on their side; but Cabot's discovery and the early Virginia charters were poor pretexts for the seizure of the Dutch colony. It was, however, inevitable that it should be absorbed by the English simply

because the great fertile middle region was important to the unity and defense of the English settlements. So in September, 1664, in time of peace, the little capital on Manhattan Island was surprised, overawed and captured by an English fleet. The inhabitants had no desire to fight, and though brave, honest Governor Stuyvesant—"Headstrong Peter" he was often called—angrily tore in pieces the letter from the English commodore requiring the surrender, one of the citizens gathered up the fragments, pieced them together and joined the rest of the people in forcing the governor to accept the terms offered. The subjugation of the whole of New Netherland quickly followed, and the territory was thrown open to English settlers.

Stuyvesant, after journeying to Holland to make a report to the authorities, returned to New York to pass the few remaining years of his life. He lived in peaceful retirement on his bowery, or farm, which occupied the space now bounded by Fourth Avenue and the East River, and by Sixth and Seventeenth Streets. His wooden, two-story house was approached through a garden, bright with flowers, arranged in beds of geometrical pattern. A warm friend-



Anthony's Nose as seen from Doodletown Bay

ship sprang up between him and the English, and these were doubtless his happiest years. He died at the age of eighty in 1672.

England and Holland were then again at war, and the following year a powerful Dutch fleet appeared in New York Bay. There was a brief exchange of volleys between it and the feeble fort, a few lives were sacrificed, and the city on Manhattan passed into the hands of its founders. The fleet shortly all sailed for Europe except a frigate and a sloop-of-war, and the conquerors of the province were left in a decidedly precarious situation. Houses had been built and gardens planted so close to the old Manhattan fort as to interfere with firing its cannon. The offending houses were either pulled down or moved away and the fortress was much strengthened; but in less than a year, by a treaty signed in Europe, the province was surrendered to the English.

Thenceforth for fully a century the history of the Hudson is simply that of the development of local trade and sea-going commerce. At the beginning of the Revolution, New York was among the foremost of American seaports, and the Hudson Valley was the most populous and important highway to the interior north of the

Delaware. Besides it had a vital strategic value because it furnished a direct water route between the southern coast and the English strongholds in Canada. It was essential that the American patriots should retain it in their control, since its loss would mean the separation of New England from the rest of the colonies. During much of the war, therefore, a struggle for the possession of the Hudson went on, and many of the most thrilling and consequential operations of both armies were conducted in this valley.

When the war ended, business revived more quickly and vigorously, perhaps, along the Hudson than anywhere else. All the larger towns considered themselves seaports, and each strove to bring to itself not only the country trade but foreign commerce. Turnpikes were built from the towns inland, whaling and fishing craft were constructed and manned, and Albany and Troy secured improvements of the upper channel to give them an equal chance with the towns lower down. Lines of fast passenger sloops sailing at regular intervals were organized, and the up-river ports thrived and made good headway even in competition with

New York City. But this particular form of prosperity was brief.

In 1807 Robert Fulton proved on the Hudson that steam navigation was practical, and steam-boats were used for years on this river before they were adopted elsewhere. The new method of conveyance so cheapened and quickened the transportation of goods and passengers, that it lessened the importance of the up-river ports and ministered to the supremacy of the great town on Manhattan Island. Then came the opening of the Erie Canal and the Delaware and Hudson Canal, and tugs were ready to haul the canal boats which reached the river from the far interior straight on to New York without pause. About the same time the railways began building, and the fate of the up-river towns as seaports was sealed. They were no longer in the race with New York.

Up to this time the river's present name was by no means universally accepted. In the early days every explorer gave it a name to suit his own fancy, and the names became awkwardly numerous. By the Dutch it came to be commonly called the "Great River," or the "River of the Mountains," or the "North River" to distinguish it from the Delaware or "South

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River," and they never connected the name of Hudson with its waters. At present the term "North River," which is still in everyday use in New York, applies merely to the harbor portion of the stream between the metropolis and Jersey City. Probably the adoption of the name "Hudson River" by the company which built the railway along the east shore has done more than any other agency to displace the name "North River," and fasten the old navigator's name in popular speech.



The Northern Gateway of the Highlands



III

RIVER TRAFFIC

BEFORE the advent of the railroads, and for a number of years afterward, there was hardly a village on the Hudson that did not have a fleet of five or six sailing vessels, and some towns had ten times that many. A considerable proportion of the able-bodied men "followed the river." Not only were they proud of their calling, but the skipper who made the best runs and carried the biggest freights was a man of distinction. With so numerous a white-winged fleet on its waters, the Hudson must have had a beauty which it does not attain at present. For no steam vessel fits into a scene with such grace and charm as does one equipped with sails.

A voyage from the metropolis to Albany was then a serious undertaking. The sloops were often many days on the way; for the cautious navigators took in sail when it blew fresh, and came to anchor at night, and they stopped and sent the boat ashore to get milk for tea, without

which it was impossible for the worthy old lady passengers to subsist. Besides there were the much-discussed perils of the Tappan Sea and the Highlands. In short, "a prudent Dutch burgher would talk of such a voyage for months beforehand, and never undertook it without putting his affairs in order, making his will, and having prayers said for him in the churches."

In those simpler days, Washington Irving, while still a youth, made this river trip, and in a letter describing it says: "A sloop was chosen, but she had yet to complete her freight and secure a sufficient number of passengers. Days were consumed in drumming up a cargo. This was a tormenting delay to me, who, boy-like, had packed up my trunk at the first mention of the expedition.

"At length the sloop actually got under way. As she worked slowly out of the dock into the stream, there was a great exchange of last words between friends on board and friends on shore, and much waving of handkerchiefs when the sloop was out of hearing.

"Our captain was a native of Albany, of one of the old Dutch stocks. His crew was composed of blacks, reared in the family and belonging to him.

“What a time of intense delight was that first sail through the Highlands. I sat on the deck as we slowly tided along at the foot of those stern mountains, and gazed with wonder and admiration at cliffs impending far above me, crowned with forests, with eagles sailing and screaming around them; or beheld rock and tree and sky reflected in the glassy stream. And then how solemn and thrilling the scene as we anchored at night at the foot of these mountains, and everything grew dark and mysterious; and I heard the plaintive note of the whip-poor-will, or was startled now and then by the sudden leap and heavy splash of the sturgeon.”

The best known name connected with navigation on the Hudson is that of Robert Fulton. He was American born, with a natural taste for art and invention. Among the various mechanical devices he originated were a mill for sawing marble, a machine for flax-spinning, several types of canal boats and a submarine torpedo. He was very far from being the first to propose steam navigation, but his preëminence in this connection is deserved, because he was the first to win a practical success. Experiments in this direction seem to have been made as early as 1690, and as time went on the attempts

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became increasingly numerous. In 1784 James Rumsey tried to propel a boat on the Potomac by forcing a jet of water from the stern with a steam pump. A few years later he experimented with a boat on the Delaware which was equipped with long oars moved by steam power, and he actually ran this curious craft as a public carrier on the river all through one summer.

When Fulton took up the problem of steam navigation he was living in France where our American minister at the time was Robert R. Livingston. The two men met and became mutually interested in planning a steamboat. A vessel was built and launched on the Seine; but it was too frail for the weight of the engine, which broke through the bottom one stormy night and sank in the river. However, Fulton and his partner were not discouraged, and the latter agreed to provide funds for a larger boat to be tried on the Hudson. This was constructed, after plans furnished by Fulton, at a shipyard on the East River and was about 130 feet long with uncovered paddle-wheels at the side. She was named the *Clermont* after Livingston's country seat on the banks of the Hudson at Tivoli.

The boat left New York for Albany on

August 17, 1807; and a writer of that time in speaking of its departure says: "Nothing could exceed the surprise and admiration of all who witnessed the experiment. Before the *Clermont* had made the progress of a quarter of a mile, the greatest unbeliever must have been converted. The man, who, while he looked on the expensive machine, thanked his stars that he had more wisdom than to waste his money on such idle schemes, changed the expression of his features as the boat moved from the wharf and gained her speed. The jeers of the ignorant who had neither sense nor feeling enough to suppress their contemptuous ridicule and rude jokes, were silenced by a vulgar astonishment which deprived them of the power of utterance, till the triumph of genius extorted from the incredulous multitude which crowded the shores, shouts of congratulation and applause."

The *Clermont* made the trip to Albany in thirty-two hours, a speed of about five miles an hour, and Fulton wrote to a friend: "The power of propelling boats by steam is now fully proved. The morning I left New York there were not perhaps thirty persons in the city who believed the boat would ever move one mile an hour, or be of the least utility."

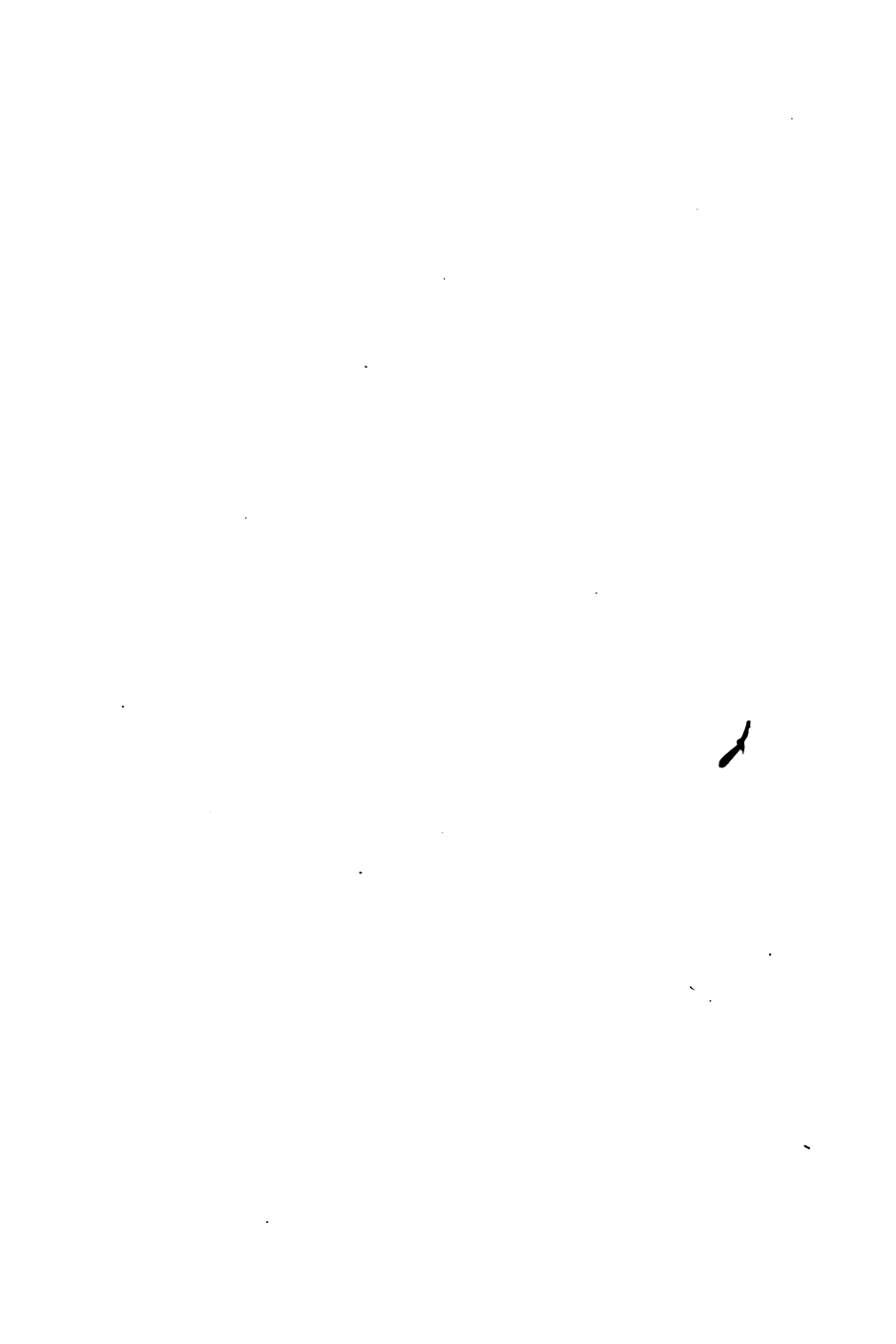
Its success as a passenger boat was assured. People would not be satisfied with the slow sloops and stage-coaches when they could travel by steamboat at five miles an hour. The *Clermont* was equipped with two masts and sails to take advantage of favoring winds. She burned fat pine wood under her boilers, and volumes of black smoke poured out of her large funnel. At night when the smoke was brilliant with sparks a contemporary writer declares that "The crews of many sailing vessels shrank beneath their decks at the terrific sight, while others prostrated themselves and besought Providence to protect them from the horrible monster which was lighting its path by the fire it vomited."

One of the Hudson Valley farmers, after observing the strange apparition, hurried home and assured his wife that he "had seen the devil going up the river in a sawmill."

The year following the *Clermont's* success two more steamers were finished for the Hudson, and the same number were constructed in 1809, and three in 1811. For a long time nearly all the travelling on the boats was for business rather than pleasure.



The Wharves at Poughkeepsie



Fulton soon turned his attention to inventing a steam ferry-boat, and by 1813 had two in operation, one on the North and one on the East River. These took the place of boats that were propelled by driving two or four horses round and round in the hold. The horses were attached to a pole connected with a gearing that made the paddle wheels rotate, and the boats were primitive and slow.

Not till 1819, four years after Fulton's death, did a vessel propelled by steam cross the Atlantic. She sailed from Savannah for Liverpool and made the trip in twenty-eight days, using both sails and steam. She was so constructed that her paddle-wheels could be taken on to the deck in stormy weather.

All the earlier river boats which followed the *Clermont* were small, and most of the space in them was devoted to the machinery. Accommodations for passengers were limited, and freight was seldom or never carried. The fare from New York to Albany was seven dollars, and for even the shortest distance between stops the fare was one dollar. In a steamboat advertisement published in 1808 the following caution supplemented the time-table: "As the times when the boat may arrive at the different places

may vary an hour, more or less, according to the advantage or disadvantage of wind and tide, those who wish to come on board will see the necessity of being on the spot an hour before the time."

The New York legislature at first gave Fulton and Livingston a monopoly in the steamboat business of the Hudson; but rivals presently began to appear, rates were cut and "runners" for the different steamboat lines made the New York water front a lively place. Competition was keenest about 1860. The steamboat business had already become a good deal demoralized by the Hudson River Railroad which was completed to Albany in 1851, and the river trip from New York to Albany could be made for a dime. The only recourse of the steamboats was to charge well for meals and sleeping accommodations.

Steamboating reached the height of its glory in 1840 when there were not far from one hundred steamboats on the Hudson. They were the pride of the towns from which they hailed, but were as a matter of fact gorgeously overloaded with ornament, though it must be acknowledged that this vulgar magnificence accorded with the taste of the period. Each

craft had its partisans and they were ever ready to engage in a wordy warfare over its speed and beauty as compared with rival boats.

Vessels that were at all evenly matched were always trying to beat each other. Sometimes the racing spirit was so intense that they would rush past an announced landing, even if a score or more of persons were waiting to embark, leaving the hapless people on the dock. During a race between the *Vanderbilt* and the *Oregon* from Albany to New York the latter's coal gave out; but instead of allowing this to mean defeat, the captain had the woodwork of the berths, the chairs, benches, furniture of state-rooms and everything else that would burn put under the boilers to keep up steam. He was rewarded for the sacrifice by having the satisfaction of winning the race.

In 1852 racing was practically stopped by law, because it had developed so reckless a disregard for the safety and convenience of the passengers, and bursting boilers were of such frequent occurrence as to make travellers very nervous.

The Hudson is a treacherous river to navigate in a fog, and the pilots have to be watchful at all times owing to the numerous shoals and rocks. Only an expert can take a boat through the

sharp turns of the Highlands. The disasters make a formidable list, though considering the number of persons carried the loss of life has been creditably small. One of the most serious of the wrecks among the earlier boats was that of the *Swallow*, April 7, 1845. She left Albany in the evening. When near the city of Hudson she struck a little rocky island, broke in two, and in a few minutes sank. Two steamboats with which she was racing soon came to her assistance and other help was rendered by dwellers on the land; but the night was exceedingly dark, with snow and rain and a heavy gale, and fifteen lives were lost. The rocks on which the vessel was wrecked were formerly known as "Noah's Brig," a title that originated in the following incident: One night a raft in command of a man whose first name was Noah neared this point, and the skipper espied in the gloom a dark object looming before him which he concluded was a brig under full sail. "Brig ahoy!" he shouted.

There was no response. Again in stentorian voice he hailed the craft, and still received no attention. The mysterious vessel kept unswervingly to its course. Noah was exasperated

and he yelled, "Brig ahoy, there! Answer, or I'll run you down."

No reply was vouchsafed, and true to his word, he ran down the island, but without doing great damage either to that or his raft. What he thought were two masts and sails proved to be two trees.

Boiler explosions were a cause of a number of wrecks, and collisions were responsible for others; but the most serious loss of life was the result of the burning of the *Henry Clay* in 1852. She was nearing New York from up the river when the fire was discovered. The captain headed her for the shore at Riverdale and ran her hard aground. But while it was only a step to the shore from the bow, the stern was in deep water, and unfortunately most of the passengers were cut off from the forward end of the boat by the flames. A wild panic ensued, terror-stricken men and women fought for possession of the life preservers and struggled with one another after leaping into the water. Sixty persons perished and among these was a sister of Nathaniel Hawthorne.

The passenger steamers on the river now are very different from those of the old days. They are great floating hotels, faithful to their schedule

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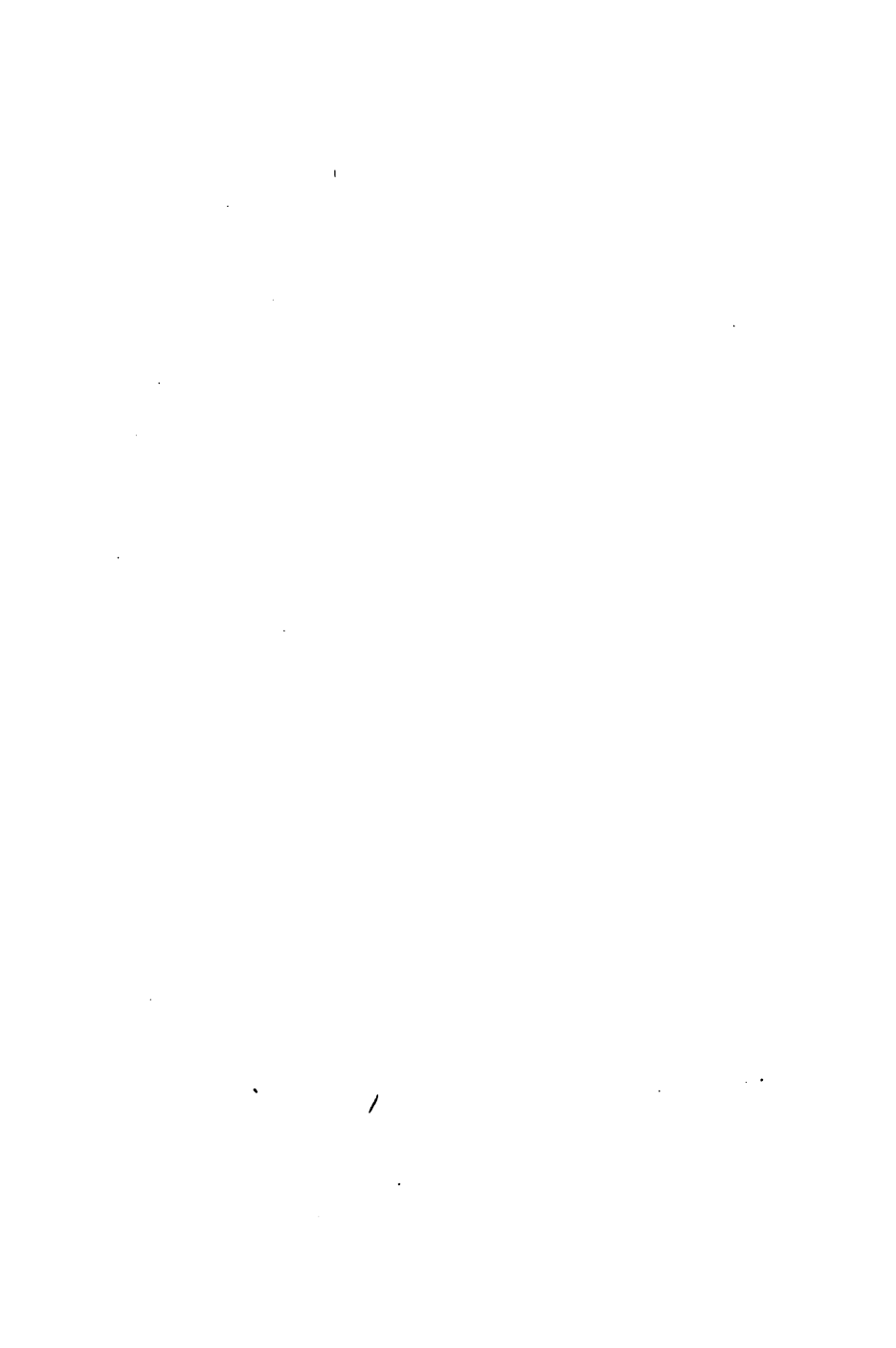
time, swift and comfortable. Their appointments are tasteful and they are run with a due regard for safety. But whether they sweep along in full view during the day, or pass at night scanning the country with the inquisitive brilliance of their searchlights, no one is amazed by them. They are far more imposing spectacles than Fulton's little *Clermont*, but that was the first of its kind and aroused the wonder of every villager and boatman from the metropolis to Albany.

Of perhaps more commercial importance than the steamers, are the canal boats. The tows for down the river are made up at the basin just above Albany where the Erie Canal enters the Hudson. They are lashed four or five abreast and there are often from sixty to eighty boats in a tow, so that they string out for nearly half a mile. The steamers that pull these tows up and down the river are for the most part old passenger boats rebuilt and adapted for the purpose by the removal of their upper works.

The Erie Canal connecting the Great Lakes with the tide water of the Hudson is 361 miles in length. It was begun in 1817, and eight years were required for its completion, in celebration of which a grand pageant was prepared.



On a canal boat



October 26, 1825, a flotilla of new and gaily decorated canal boats started from the Lake Erie end of the canal for New York City. The news of the departure was communicated to the metropolis by the firing of cannon located along the line of the canal and the Hudson so that the signal travelled the entire distance in an hour and twenty minutes.

When the canal boat packets reached New York on November fifth at five o'clock in the morning every vessel in the harbor was adorned with flags and bunting, the church bells rang, and a salute of cannon was fired. The canal boats were accompanied by a procession of vessels to Sandy Hook where the schooner *Dolphin* was anchored; and around this the flotilla circled. On the leading canal boat was a golden hooped keg, filled to the bung with the fresh water of Lake Erie. Governor Clinton, who was present with his retinue, poured the contents of the keg into the salt water of the Atlantic, and it was announced that the marriage of the Great Lakes and the ocean had been duly solemnized.

IV

MANHATTAN

THE river ends at the southern point of Manhattan Island where it joins New York Bay. Its wide channel is here alive with shipping. Now and then a great ocean steamer passes going to and from its wharf, the broad, open-ended ferry boats ply back and forth, tugs are moving noisily hither and thither usually pulling some vastly bigger vessel or a long line of barges, and there are numerous other craft large and small. It must be confessed that most of this shipping is prosaic, and not a little of it is actually ugly. Even the great steamers that voyage to other continents consist for the most part of tremendous black hulls that can lay small claim to beauty. The comparatively rare sailing vessels with their tapering masts and white canvas spread to the wind are almost the only ones that have any marked grace and charm. Steam is the ruling force, and the sole aim seems to be utility, yet the marvelous energy displayed and the vastness of

the business that is going on are strikingly impressive.

Battery Park occupies the extreme lower end of the island. It is an agreeable bit of green-sward and trees, but a good deal marred by a long loop of the elevated railroad, and you wonder that it has not been overwhelmed long ago by the encroachment of the mammoth city buildings which rise to giddy heights in the immediate background. The gray, hazy mystery of the ocean envelops the view down the harbor, the waves swash ceaselessly along the masonry sea-wall, there is a salty odor to the air, and all in all it is a spot that entices to loitering and meditation.

Bordering the water on the west side is a big spreading building very like a shallow pot with a low, conical cover clapped on top. This is Castle Garden, now an aquarium, but formerly used for festivals, concerts and public meetings of various kinds. It was originally erected by the government in 1807 for a fortification, but when finished its foundations proved too weak to support the weight of the heavy ordinance, and its intended use was abandoned. Castle Garden's most notable claim to fame is the fact that here in 1850 was given Jenny Lind's first

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concert on American soil. A choice of seats was disposed of at auction and the first place on opening night brought two hundred and twenty-five dollars. There was an audience of five thousand persons, and as the *New York Herald* announced the next day, "Never did a mortal in this city, or perhaps any other receive such homage as the sovereign of song received from the sovereign people." Jenny Lind's share of the proceeds from the opening concert was about ten thousand dollars, all of which she bestowed on various charitable and public institutions of the city. Nearly one-third of it went in a lump to the three volunteer fire departments, probably at the suggestion of the singer's manager, P. T. Barnum, who keenly appreciated the advertising value of such a gift.

The huge buildings that extend from the Battery northward every year become more numerous and the new structures that are added have a tendency to rise higher and higher. Their towering masses are almost frightful in the near view, and the crowded gloom of the canyon-like streets between is depressing; but seen from the water, that lofty irregular skyline is replete with grandeur, and the buildings themselves, softened and massed in the haze, with



A glimpse of the spire of Trinity Church

here and there a plume of steam or smoke, or the gleam of a gilded dome, make a delightful spectacle. What a dreamy wonderland! How suggestive of the fabulous—as if it all might melt away! And what wealth and power and aggressiveness these soaring heights of masonry represent!

Where is the spire of old Trinity at the head of Wall Street? We used to think it was “in danger of tearing the silver lining from the clouds with its heavenward-pointing tip.” But now it is dwarfed to insignificance among its tall, worldly neighbors.

In going up the river after leaving the Battery, the city presents nothing especially salient for a long distance. The blocks of brick and stone repeat each other endlessly, and only now and then an aspiring tower or skyscraper on this broader portion of the island lifts itself conspicuously enough above its fellow buildings to be impressive.

There are plenty of great ocean steamers along the wharves, but they lie in narrow basins between the big, barn-like warehouses on the piers, and you only get a glimpse of the tips of masts and smokestacks, or, in passing on the

water, obtain a hasty and unsatisfactory view in sharp perspective of the entire vessels.

At 72nd Street we come to Riverside Park which extends along the bank of the stream to 130th Street. It is a most attenuated strip, but the steep slope it occupies makes possible much variety in its winding roads and paths and affords many delectable views of the great river. Here are trees and shrubbery, and the birds flit and sing, and the children tumble and play on the sunny declivities of greensward, or loiter in the grateful shade if the day is warm. Here, too, the babies take their outings in care of mothers or nurse girls, and all sorts of other people ramble, or linger, or drive.

On its most commanding height, at the extreme north end, is the temple-like tomb of General Grant. This is built of flawless white granite, and the cost was six hundred thousand dollars, representing ninety thousand individual subscriptions. The tomb is a striking landmark as seen from the river, but can hardly be called graceful. In form it resembles what a child might attain by placing a round block on top of a somewhat larger square one. Moreover it stands severely alone on a broad terrace with

no green boughs or creeping vines to soften its austerity.

Farther back from the river on the airy crest of the ridge is Columbia University. This is still in the making, but has some noble buildings that will increase in charm with the mellowing of the passing years and the accumulation of associations. Especially satisfying is the library, one of the purest examples of classic Greek architecture in this country. It is approached by a broad, paved esplanade and a wide flight of steps, and its pillared front and great dome have a repose and simplicity that are delightful.

About twenty-five streets farther north, occupying a lofty, flowing sweep of land, is the cemetery of Trinity Church. It is closely surrounded by city blocks, but when you go inside, where stand the ranks of tombs and monuments, you find abundant trees and shrubbery, and eternal quiet reigns. On this spot the naturalist Audubon dwelt for many years before it was taken for its present use, and here he is buried.

Continuing along the ridge we presently come to its loftiest height where it makes a slight cape-like projection into the Hudson. At the time of the Revolution a strong earth-

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work was constructed here and named Fort Washington. Several other points in the neighborhood were fortified, and though the works were all weak, the positions they occupied made them formidable.

For the defense of the city itself, General Lee, early in 1776, hastily gathered levies of raw troops in Connecticut. The merchants and other citizens of New York were fearful that the presence of these troops would make the town a battleground and mean its total destruction. So when Lee arrived on the same day that the British Squadron from Boston reached the harbor the community was in a ferment of agitation. An exodus of the more timid inhabitants began, and in the succeeding hours of darkness there were "carts going and boats loading, and women and children crying, and distressed voices heard in the roads."

However, the expected clash did not occur, and the fleet soon sailed south. Its commander had apparently found the place better prepared for resistance than he expected; and when he withdrew, the Americans proceeded to fortify the Highlands, which was exactly what the British had intended to do. In April General Israel Putnam assumed command in the city

and undertook to close the Hudson by erecting several batteries along shore and placing obstructions in the channel opposite Fort Washington.

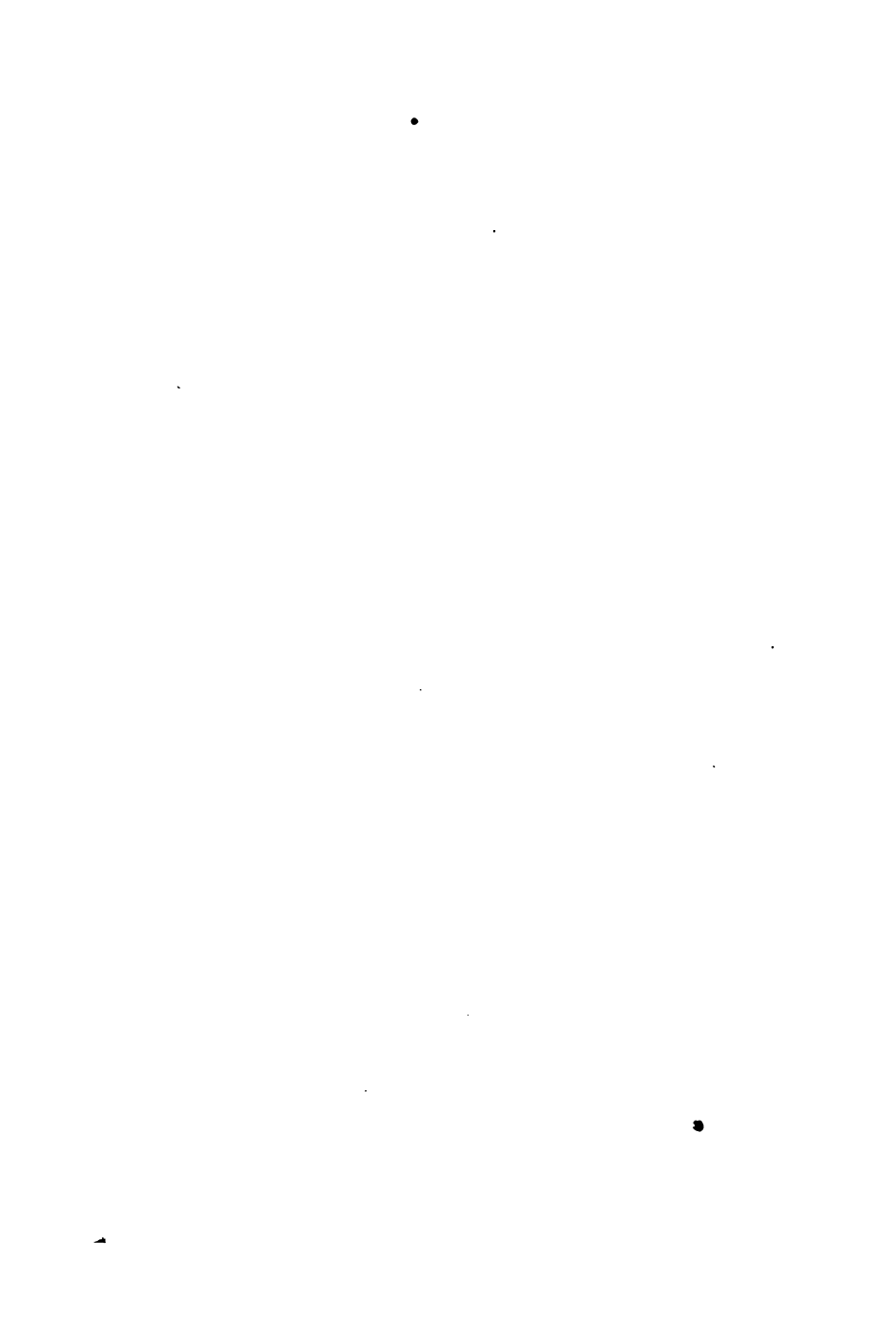
Toward the end of June another British fleet arrived bearing a considerable body of troops. In all there were one hundred and thirty vessels, but at first their only land possession was Staten Island. In spite of these menacing neighbors the Colonials in New York greeted the news that the Declaration of Independence had been signed in Philadelphia with ardent enthusiasm. They celebrated the event for several days, and incidentally pulled down the leaden statue of George III which they had set up on Bowling Green only a short time before. The statue was afterward made into bullets to be used in the patriot cause.

Putnam prepared fourteen fire-ships which were to be sent among the enemy's fleet, but the fleet took measures to protect itself from such attacks, and the fire-ships were a failure. Likewise a submarine engine which was hopefully constructed failed to explode at the time and place planned, and merely blew up a vast column of water to the enemy's great astonishment, but doing no damage.

The American force was decidedly smaller than that of the British, and was largely made up of raw recruits. Many of the yeomen hastily summoned from the farms were destitute of arms, lacking which they were ordered to bring with them a shovel or pickaxe, or a scythe straightened and fastened to a pole. As affairs grew more gloomy the militia became intractable and impatient to leave. Deserters were the scandal of the day, and two-thirds of the Connecticut troops were smitten with an attack of homesickness that nothing but the sight of their own firesides could cure. The restraint which was indispensable to the army's effectiveness was too galling to men accustomed to unbounded freedom, and the din of arms and their lack of military skill made them, when opposed to the trained soldiers of the king, "ready to fly from their own shadows," as Washington said. Members of the militia could only be obliged to serve three consecutive months beyond the boundaries of the state in which they were enlisted. They were called out and disbanded as the exigencies demanded, and were nearly as apt to leave a cannon in a ditch as a plough in a furrow.



Riverside Park and the tomb of General Grant



If the troops could have been depended on a battle might have been risked in defense of the city, but as things were, no sooner was an actual movement begun against the town than the troops withdrew in haste. It was a sultry day in September, and they abandoned their tents, blankets and heavy guns and retreated under a burning sun amid clouds of dust. They were encumbered with women and children and all kinds of baggage. Many were overcome by fatigue and thirst, and some perished by drinking cold water too freely. The safe accomplishment of the perilous retreat was said to be due to the fact that when the attacking force reached Murray Hill, then the country residence of a patriot of that name, Mrs. Murray sent out a servant to invite the British general to stop and take luncheon. A halt was ordered and the officers were entertained for over two hours. But while they leisurely ate and drank, and bantered their hostess, Putnam's flying army had passed by within a mile of them.

The Americans assembled on the rocky heights at the northern end of Manhattan Island. It was thought that the obstructions in the river here with their accompanying batteries on each shore would prevent any hostile ship from

passing. But early on the morning of the ninth of October, several of the British vessels got under way and came standing up the river with an easy southern breeze. They broke through the vaunted barriers as through a cobweb, and in spite of the constant fire of seven batteries passed on without a pause. About a month later an attack was made on Fort Washington garrisoned by three thousand men under the command of Colonel Magaw. At nightfall the day before, Washington had arrived at Fort Lee which crowned the palisades across the river. He entered a boat and had partly crossed the river when he met Generals Greene and Putnam returning. They assured him that the garrison was in admirable shape to make a strong defense, and prevailed on him to go back to the Jersey shore with them. But he was greatly excited, for he had urged that Manhattan was untenable and should be entirely abandoned, and this was one of the few occasions when the "Father of his Country" swore.

The next day, about noon, sharp volleys of musketry and a heavy cannonade thundering among the rocky hills proclaimed that the action was begun. Assaults were made from four directions. Washington was an anxious specta-

tor of the battle from the opposite side of the Hudson. Much of it was hidden from him by the intervening hills and forest; but the roar of cannonry from the valley of the Harlem River, the incessant crack of rifles, and the smoke rising above the tree-tops showed that a spirited resistance was being made. The action of the defenders on the south lay open to him and he was much encouraged by the gallant style in which they maintained their position. But at last, overpowered by numbers, they retreated to the fort, and as Washington beheld some of those in the rear overtaken by Hessians and cut down and bayoneted, he was completely overcome and "wept with the tenderness of a child." The defenders of the outworks to the east and north were likewise driven in, and presently Washington observed a flag enter the fort which he surmised was a summons to surrender. He wrote a note to Magaw telling him if he could hold out till evening, he would endeavor to bring off the garrison in the night. Captain Gooch of Boston offered to be the bearer of the note. He hastened down to the river, rowed across in a small boat, clambered up the ridge to the fort and delivered the message. Then he came out, ran down the steep,

broken hill, dodging the enemy, some of whom struck at him with their guns, while others attempted to thrust him with their bayonets, but he escaped them all, got into his boat and returned to Fort Lee.

Magaw was past help. The fort was so crowded by the garrison and the troops from the outworks that movement was difficult, and the enemy could at any moment pour in showers of shells that would have made dreadful slaughter. Fort Washington was therefore surrendered. This was one of the most crushing blows that befell the American cause during the entire course of the war. A considerable proportion of the best troops in the army was captured, besides an immense quantity of artillery and small arms, and there was gloom and foreboding throughout the country.

The site of the old fort has not yet been entirely overflowed by the city. It is partially wooded, and here and there amid the trees are glades of greensward, and openings that give pleasant glimpses of the river far below and of the rugged bluffs of the opposite shore.

Two miles farther north the island ends at Spuyten Duyvil Creek which connects the Hudson with the Harlem. This waterway has

been deepened and widened to allow the passage of good-sized boats, and the tides sweep through it with great vigor. The origin of its curious name has been facetiously explained by Irving; and his story has some real foundation in a fatal exhibition of foolhardiness on the part of a young Dutchman in the early days of the colony. As Irving tells the tale—

“Anthony Van Corlear, the trumpeter of Governor Stuyvesant, was sent post-haste, on the appearance of the ships of the Duke of York in the harbor, to warn the farmers up the river, and summon them to the defense of New Amsterdam. So just stopping to take a lusty dinner, and bracing to his side his junk-bottle, well charged with heart-inspiring Hollands, he issued from the city gate, sounding a farewell strain, that rung in sprightly echoes through the winding streets of New Amsterdam.

“It was a dark and stormy night when Anthony arrived at the creek which separates the island from the mainland. The wind was high, the elements in an uproar. For a short time he paused on the brink; and then bethinking himself of the urgency of his errand, he took a hearty embrace of his stone bottle, swore most valorously that he would swim

across *in spite of the devil*, and daringly plunged into the stream. Luckless Anthony! Scarcely had he buffeted half-way over, when he was observed to struggle violently, as if battling with the spirit of the waters. Instinctively he put his trumpet to his mouth and giving a vehement blast, sank forever to the bottom. The clangor of his trumpet rang far and wide through the country, alarming the neighbors round, who hurried in amazement to the spot. Here an old Dutch burgher, famed for his veracity, and who had been a witness of the fact, related to them the melancholy affair, with the fearful addition that he saw the devil, in the shape of a huge moss-bunker, seize the sturdy Anthony by the leg, and drag him beneath the waves. Certain it is the place has been called Spuyten Duyvil ever since."

This little cross valley was originally thickly inhabited by Indians. One great attraction, no doubt, was the abundance of fish, a recommendation that still holds good. Great hauls of shad are made at the mouth of the creek, and many striped bass and other less aristocratic fish reward the angler along its shores.

In my own rambling in the vicinity I paused to chat with one of these anglers, an elderly





Fishing in Spuyten Duyvil Creek

man by whom I was cordially welcomed. Cordiality is an attribute of all such haunters of the waterside. Who ever knew a fisherman to be crusty and sour, selfish and uncommunicative? He has leisure, and is sure to be something of a philosopher. While he fishes he meditates and catches much more than gets on his hook, and I think there must be some occult influence in his occupation that inclines him to a friendly affability. My acquaintance did not have the most ideal surroundings. Close behind him on the north shore were lines of railroad tracks along which frequent trains thundered, but across the stream rose an abrupt wooded hill that descended to the east into a little dale of farmland. He smoked his pipe enjoying the serenity of the day and nature's genial mood, yet very intent on his fishing. Even while we visited he kept sharp watch of two poles he had propped up at the water's edge on a bush.

"I came from Killarney penniless at the age of eighteen," said he, "and I've raised ten children right here in New York. My wife and I are still hale and hearty, and the children are a credit to us. Some of my daughters' husbands are lawyers and some are real estate men. They don't want me to work any more.

I used to have a butcher shop, but I've given it up. Yes, and now I play every day, but I get as tired as if I was working. At first, after I quit work I stayed at home, but that didn't do. The table was always so handy I'd be tasting this and that, and drinking coffee, until I hadn't any appetite. For a change I tried fishing, and now I'm at it nearly all the time. I spend about a dollar and a half a week for bait, and there isn't a stream or fishing place for a long distance around New York that I don't know. I caught a five-pound bass here last year; and I have a standing offer of ten dollars, and no questions asked, for one weighing twice that much. I give away quite some eels and Tom-cods, and on the whole I'm pretty well suited. In fact, with plenty to eat, and drink, and a feather bed to sleep on, what more does a man want?"

V

ON THE JERSEY SHORE

ACROSS the river from the Battery is the ancient settlement of Communipaw where Dutch manners and customs are said to have survived longer than anywhere else in the Hudson Valley. Some persons even go so far as to declare that the true sons of Communipaw, however modern their thoughts in the daytime, still continue to dream in Dutch. According to Irving in his burlesque "History of New York," when the first ship from Holland bringing colonists to this country came to anchor at the mouth of the Hudson, there was on the Jersey shore "a small Indian village pleasantly embowered in a grove of spreading elms, and the natives all collected on the beach, gazing in stupid admiration at the vessel. A boat was immediately dispatched to enter into a treaty with them, and approaching the shore, the skipper hailed them through a trumpet, in the most friendly terms; but so horribly confounded were these poor savages at the tremendous and un-

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couth sound of the Dutch language, that they one and all took to their heels and scampered away over the Bergen hills.

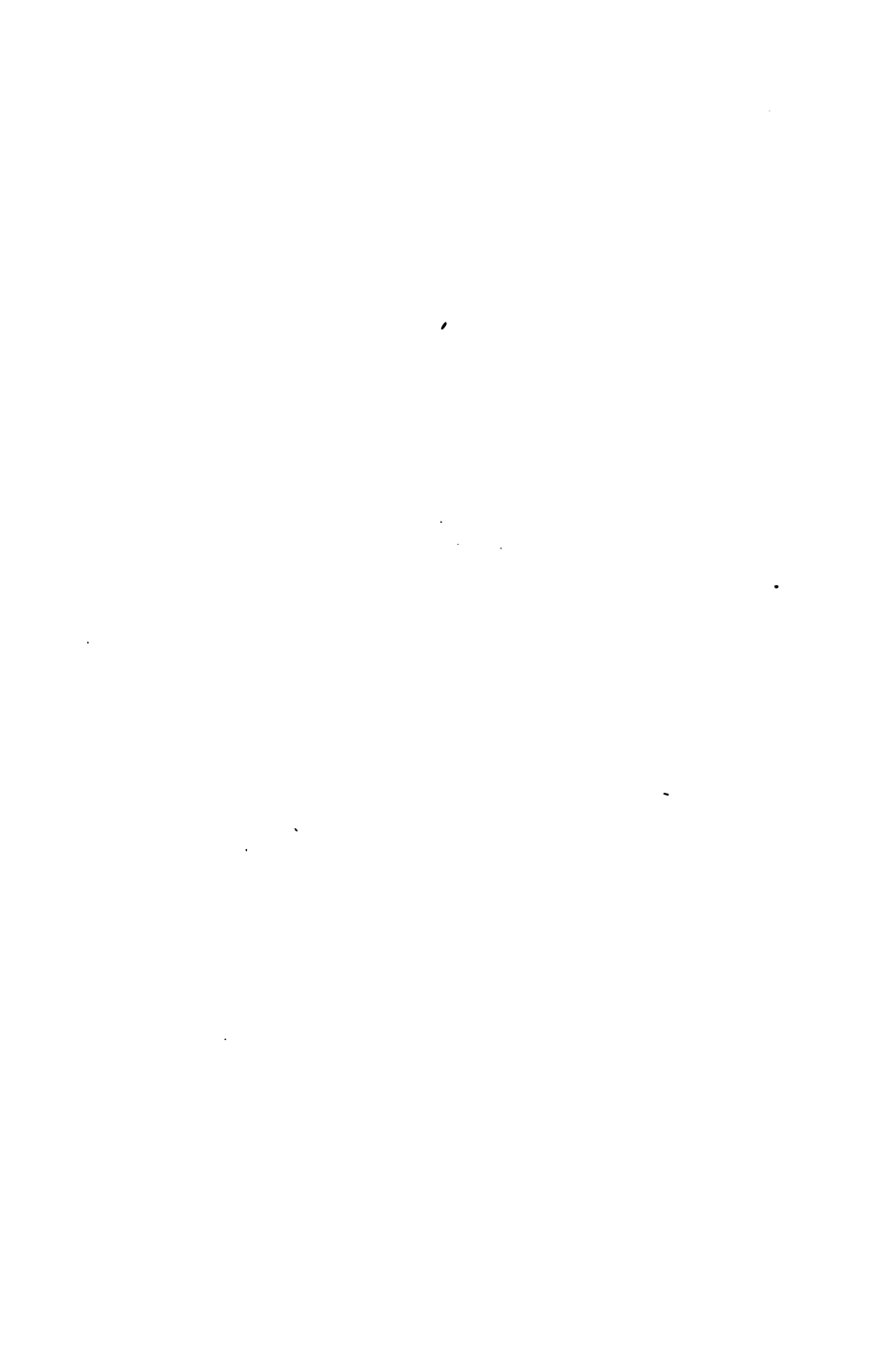
“Animated by this unlooked-for victory, our valiant heroes sprang ashore in triumph and carried the village of Communipaw by storm, notwithstanding that it was vigorously defended by half a score of old squaws and papooses. On looking about them they were transported with the excellencies of the place. The softness of the soil was wonderfully adapted to the driving of piles, the swamps and marshes afforded ample opportunities for the constructing of dykes and dams; the shallowness of the shore was peculiarly favorable to the building of docks:—in a word, this spot abounded with all the requisites for the foundation of a great Dutch city.”

There the voyagers settled in great content, and thence, as Irving's narrative has it, the founders of New Amsterdam migrated. “Thus was Communipaw the parent of New York, though on comparing the lowly village with the great flaunting city which it has engendered, one is reminded of a squat little hen that has unwittingly hatched out a long-legged turkey.”

One curious legend that Irving has chronicled



The giant buildings of lower Manhattan as seen from the Communipaw Ferry




dealing largely with life in Communipaw he calls "Guests from Gibbet Island." The story describes the peaceful village tavern known as "The Wild Goose" and tells how Yan Yost Vanderscamp, the landlord's nephew, suddenly disappeared with an old negro servant named Pluto. In process of time the landlord died, and the tavern remained shut up, waiting for a claimant; for the next heir was the missing nephew, who had not been heard of for years. "At length, one day, a boat was seen pulling for shore from a long, black, rakish-looking schooner that lay at anchor in the bay. The boat's crew seemed worthy of the craft from which they debarked. Never had such a set of noisy, roistering, swaggering varlets landed in peaceful Communipaw. They were outlandish in garb and demeanor, and were headed by a burly ruffian with a scar across his face, in whom to their great dismay, the quiet inhabitants were made to recognize Yan Yost Vanderscamp. The rear of this hopeful gang was brought up by old Pluto, who had lost an eye and grown grizzled. Vanderscamp renewed his acquaintance with the old burghers in a manner not at all to their taste. He slapped them familiarly on the back, gave them an iron grip

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of the hand, and was hail-fellow-well-met. According to his own account, he had been all the world over, had made money by bags full, had ships in every sea, and now meant to turn the Wild Goose into a country-seat where he and his comrades, all rich merchants from foreign parts, might enjoy themselves in the intervals of their voyages.

“From being a quiet, peaceful Dutch public house, the Wild Goose became a most riotous private dwelling, a rendezvous for boisterous men of the sea, who might be seen at all hours lounging about the door, or lolling out of the windows, swearing among themselves, cracking rough jokes on every passer-by, and shooting at any unhappy dog or cat, or pig that might happen to come within reach.”

Now and then they went off on a mysterious voyage, and it gradually became plain that they were pirates. At length the British government bestirred itself, “and three of the most riotous swashbucklers of the Wild Goose were hanged in chains on Gibbet Island in full sight of their favorite resort. Vanderscamp himself and his man Pluto again disappeared. The tranquillity of the village was restored; the worthy Dutchmen once more smoked their pipes in peace,



eyeing with peculiar complacency their old pests and terrors, the pirates, dangling on Gibbet Island."

But in the course of time the black man and his master came back and the latter "brought with him a wife, who seemed to have the upper hand of him. The Wild Goose mansion was again opened, but with diminished splendor and no riot.

"Late one night Yan Yost Vanderscamp was returning across the broad bay in his light skiff, rowed by his man Pluto. It was a still, sultry night; a heavy mass of lurid clouds was rising in the west, with the low mutterings of distant thunder. The storm burst over the voyagers while they were yet far from shore. The rain fell in torrents, and the lightning kept up an incessant blaze. It was midnight before they landed at Communipaw. Dripping and shivering Vanderscamp crawled homeward. His wife met him at the threshold.

" 'Is this a time,' said she, 'to bring home company to turn the house upside down?'

" 'Company?' said Vanderscamp meekly; 'I have brought no company with me.'

" 'No, indeed! They have got here before you, and are in the blue room upstairs, making

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themselves as much at home as if the house were their own.'

"Vanderscamp scrambled up to the room, and threw open the door. There at a table sat three guests from Gibbet Island, with halters round their necks, and bobbing their cups together, as if they were hob-or-nobbing, and trolling an old freebooter's glee. Starting back with horror, Vanderscamp missed his footing and fell from the top of the stairs to the bottom. He was taken up speechless, and was buried on the following Sunday.

"From that day forward the Wild Goose was pronounced a haunted house, and avoided accordingly. No one inhabited it but Vanderscamp's shrew of a widow and old Pluto, and they were considered little better than its hob-goblin visitors. It was affirmed that it still continued to be the house of entertainment for such guests, and that on stormy nights the blue chamber was occasionally illuminated, and sounds of diabolical merriment were overheard, mingling with the howling of the tempest. Some treated these as idle stories until on one such night there was a horrible uproar in the Wild Goose that could not be mistaken. It was not so much the sound of revelry, however, as

strife, with two or three piercing shrieks that pervaded every part of the village. Nevertheless, no one thought of hastening to the spot. On the contrary, the honest burghers of Communipaw drew their nightcaps over their ears, and buried their heads under the bedclothes.

“The next morning, some of the bolder and more curious undertook to reconnoitre. They found the door wide open and everything inside topsy-turvy, but the most woful sight was the widow, a corpse on the floor of the blue chamber. Old Pluto had disappeared, but later his skiff was picked up, drifting about the bay, bottom upward, and his body was found stranded among the rocks of Gibbet Island, near the foot of the pirates’ gallows.”

With Communipaw’s past in mind I crossed the river hoping that some remnants of the once serene little Dutch village might still survive; but shipping is omnipresent along the shore, and the land is almost monopolized by the railways. I followed the one highway back till I tired of its grim monotony and the lack of promise that it would lead to anything better. Along either side stalked a great row of telegraph poles bearing aloft a maze of wires, there were multitudinous railway tracks, and freight and

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passenger cars and noisy engines, mountainous heaps of coal, and a scattering of dubious buildings, while the air was laden with odors of gas and smoke. So I retraced my steps, regretting not a little the region's modern aspect as compared with what it had been.

A mile or two north of Communipaw is Hoboken where in the far past was an Indian village named Hobock. The first event of importance chronicled in its history was a massacre of the Indians in 1643. A party of Dutch reinforced by Mohawk Indians, crossed the river at night from New York and killed a hundred men, women, and children at the promontory called "Castle Point," by either shooting them or driving them mercilessly into the Hudson. A feud between the Indians and whites had long existed, but there seems to have been no sufficient excuse for this wholesale slaughter. Hoboken has a more agreeable claim to fame in the fact that here lived Colonel John Stevens who built the *Phœnix*, the first vessel that crossed the Atlantic depending entirely on steam propulsion. The waterfront of the place is now wholly given up to piers and warehouses where numerous great ocean liners discharge and take on their cargoes.



*Looking toward New York from the site of the
Burr-Hamilton duel*

A little farther up the river, where the Weehawken cliffs rise just back from the shore, are the ferry houses of the West Shore Railroad, and immediately south of them occurred the Burr-Hamilton duel. Burr had recently been defeated in his candidacy for the governorship of New York. Party feeling had run high and there had been a good deal of bitter antipathy and acrimonious speech. Hamilton was reputed to be the author of certain personal reflections on Burr's character which led to a correspondence between the two culminating in a challenge from Burr to settle their differences by a duel. Their meeting-place was a narrow grassy plateau completely embowered in foliage and about twenty feet above the river, where a little ravine opens back into the bluff. The plateau was only six feet wide and eleven paces long. A great cedar tree stood at one end, and a bowlder at the other. It was reached by a steep, rocky path leading up from the water. There was no other path or road near, and the only way to get to the place was by boat. It had already become a resort for duelists, the first combat of this nature having occurred there in 1799.

Burr and Hamilton arrived at the spot early in the morning of July 11, 1804. The parties

exchanged salutations, and after the seconds had made the necessary arrangements, Burr took his station near the cedar and Hamilton near the boulder. Both fired and Hamilton fell mortally wounded. When Burr saw that his rival had been seriously hurt he advanced with a manner and gesture expressive of regret, but being urged to leave the field by his second he turned and withdrew. He crossed the river to the city in his barge, and after a short time spent at his own house in New York he travelled South. This journey was an almost royal progress, for he was everywhere greeted by crowds of enthusiastic adherents. In the North, however, where the friends of Hamilton predominated, Burr was execrated as a murderer, and Hamilton's death the day after the duel was mourned as a public calamity. Burr was indicted by the grand jury, but the case never was brought to trial; and when Congress met, Burr, who was nearing the end of his term as Vice-President of the United States, took his accustomed place in the Senate as its presiding officer.

A monument long marked the spot where Hamilton fell. It was almost destroyed by the gradual chipping of the relic-hunters, and at

last was removed to the bluff above. The plateau continued to be the resort of duelists for many years. Captain Deas, whose home was on the bluff was strongly opposed to this method of settling differences, and when he saw a party approaching the place often interposed and sometimes affected a reconciliation. The last duel occurred in 1845, and was a farce, for the pistols were loaded with cork. When the West Shore Railroad was opened in 1883 the duel terrace was torn away to make room for the tracks. But there is still left between the railroad and the bluff a ragged strip of woods with a weedy undergrowth and strewing of rocks, and the outlook from amid the trees affords a rather charming view of the mighty city off across the broad river.

At Shadyside, two miles farther north, was fought a very lively minor engagement in the Revolutionary War. Here was a ferry, and near by a blockhouse had been erected which was garrisoned by a detachment of British troops. This garrison protected the loyalists of the neighborhood who had a disagreeable habit of picking up any of the rebels' cattle and horses that strayed into the vicinity. The Continentals attacked the blockhouse intending to drive away

the garrison and get possession of such stolen property as they could for its rightful owners. But they were repulsed with the loss of sixty men, and retired after destroying some boats and securing a number of cattle.

Two miles above Weehawken, the Bergen Ridge which hitherto has fronted the river, trends inland, and in its place a new and much higher wall of trap-rock, extends northward with scarcely a break for many miles. According to the Mohicans this great rampart along the west bank of the river, rising almost from the water's edge, was erected by the Great Spirit to protect his favorite abodes from the unhallowed eyes of mortals. The early settlers called it The Palisades, a name naturally suggested to pioneers who were so familiar with stockades made of logs set on end. The Palisades are of the same formation as the Giant's Causeway in Ireland and Fingal's Cave on the Scotch Island of Staffa; and consist of a lava rock that in some ancient time, while molten, filled a rift in the earth's surface. It cooled in columnar form, and the softer rock on either side gradually wore away leaving this tremendous line of cliff with its peculiar formation.

From a distance the cliff seems singularly regular, but in a near view it is found to have many minor undulations and breaks and jutting crags that make the great mass of weather-beaten rock quite delightful in its variety of outline. Only its upper portion is wholly exposed and perpendicular in its rise; for below this final uplift is a long slope of shattered fragments where numerous trees have found a footing and adorn the declivity with their foliage. At the southern end the Palisades start with a height of about three hundred feet, and gradually rise till, twenty miles to the north where they end at the Tappan Sea, they reach an altitude of five hundred and fifty feet. The broad river dwarfs their height, and it is only when you observe the comparative size of a house or a boat at their base that you get an adequate idea of their magnitude. Breaks sufficient to enable wagon roads to descend to the river occur in only three places, and scarcely more places exist where a foot climber can make the descent.

For some two miles at the southern extremity a road runs along the top of this lofty, breezy ridge and affords a charming outlook. The opposite low, verdant shore is in view for a long

distance to the north, while in the other direction the eye reaches to the far-off metropolis, and on a clear day even to its crowded bay.

The crest of the promontory where the Palisades begin was fortified with a strong redoubt, known as Fort Lee, early in the Revolutionary War, but after the capture of Fort Washington across the river it was plain that this companion stronghold was doomed. Every effort was made to remove the ammunition and stores. Within a few days, however, a large British force landed five miles above and marched rapidly in its direction to effect its capture. The Americans retreated in great haste abandoning all their cannon, blankets and eatables. Tents were left standing and camp kettles on the fires.

The site of the old fort is at present a neglected tract overgrown with trees and bushes; and amid the thin woods and rocky hollows the wild flowers flourish in spite of wanderers from New York who pluck them unmercifully.

One of the highest and most striking points of the Palisades is Indian Head near their northern termination. The rugged beauty of this outjutting shoulder of rock has always been admired and it was a favorite outlook for the Indians long centuries before any white man





A waterside dwelling

ever saw it. But unfortunately the kind of rock and its convenient situation made it the prey of a contractor in search of road material. Blasting operations were begun and the wild grandeur of the craggy point was much injured before the public was sufficiently aroused to demand that the mutilation be stopped. Lest the rest of the Palisades should share the same fate, and this wonderful example of nature's sculpture be lost to future generations, the entire strip was purchased jointly by the states of New York and New Jersey, and now it is a park. Many campers resort to the Palisades in summer, and for their benefit the park authorities have made a path that creeps along in a piquantly irregular way near the verge of the river, over the knolls and in and out of the hollows.

VI

THE FISH AND THE FISHERMEN

ONE of the few breaks in the mighty wall of the Palisades is Alpine Gorge, directly across the river from Yonkers. Here a road makes a steep zigzag up to the summit of the cliff. By the shore are a few scattered dwellings, all small, and some of them merely one-room shacks that serve as shelters for the fishermen during the spring run of the shad. The vicinity was especially charming at the time of my visit, when the new leafage was bedecking the rocky slope with its tender green, and the wild apple trees were here and there blushing full of bloom, and an occasional dogwood with its scattering of big white blossoms like a fragment of a snowstorm, brightened the woodland.

Among the dwellings at Alpine Gorge I observed particularly a little white-washed cabin with a bunch of big willows in front of it reaching out over the water and shadowing a slender wharf that had a rowboat fastened at the end. The house looked quite idyllic at a short remove,

but in the near view its shabbiness was decidedly too apparent. The family living in it included numerous children, several of whom attended school on the upland. The schoolhouse was a long distance away by the road, but the children had discovered short cuts that enabled them to get there in about twenty minutes. The woman of the house seemed to think that the environment of their home was on the whole rather agreeable. "But it's pretty bad here in the middle of winter," she acknowledged, "and it is too hot sometimes in summer. Usually, though, on the hot days there's a breeze, we're so near the water, and we have the shade of the rocks in the afternoon."

Under a clump of bushes was a hen-coop with a brood of young chickens running about near it, and I asked if the wild creatures that inhabited the untamed surroundings did not make havoc with the poultry.

"No," she responded, "they don't bother us much, and I think it's because we don't offer to harm *them*. If we went to shooting 'em, they'd come and carry off our chickens just out of revenge. We have foxes and skunks and mink and rabbits along here, and every year a pair of eagles builds a nest up on one of the

crag. I see the eagles every morning and night as they go and come. We ought to have twelve chickens; but the dog ate two of the eggs. That's why he's tied up."

The oldest dwelling in the group by the shore is a colonial house of humble type in which Cornwallis is reputed to have stopped at one time. Immediately behind it is the abrupt slope of shattered fragments that in the course of ages have broken from the cliff towering over all the scene. The disintegration still goes on, and within a few rods of the old house is a forty-ton boulder that rolled down a few years ago from near the top of the cliff. "It was in the month of April," explained a local resident, "and about seven in the evening. There must have been ice in the cracks of the cliff, and the heat that day made the ice expand and loosened a great mass of rock. You'd have thought from the noise that the whole mountain was coming down. The only person in the house was a woman, and she was a lucky bird, for she was so scared she didn't dare stir. If she'd run out, some of the stones would most likely have hit her. That big one just missed the house and a smaller one jammed half-way through the kitchen wall and is there yet. Look up at the



Sbad fishermen starting out with their net

cliff and notice all those yaller places. Pieces have dropped away there in recent years and the weather hasn't had time to turn the surface gray. Spring is the time when most of 'em loosen. Let a stranger come and camp by the shore at that season, and he hears the rocks dropping all night. It makes him nervous. He gets up in the morning and looks at the cliff and says, 'I guess I'll get out of here.'"

The man whom I have quoted was mending a shad net hung over some low poles. "The shad ain't running very good this year," he said. "This river is getting played out for shad fishing; but I seen the time when fishing here at Alpine was quite a business, and all the men around made a living at it. Now they only put in a few weeks while the shad run lasts, and then they work out. We can't make enough to earn our salt. I had an uncle who used to clear a thousand or two thousand dollars every year shad fishing. He had eight men working for him. They'd get a boat load at every haul those days—get so many they'd be tired of handling 'em. The fish were sold for four or five dollars a hundred, but the fishermen then did much better at that price than we do selling for from twenty-five to

seventy-five cents apiece. I don't know what has happened to the shad. Probably the sewers that discharge into the river from the towns and cities are a good deal to blame; for shad are clean water fish, you know, and can't live in foul water. Then there's the carp that have been brought from Germany and put into the Hudson. They're always nosing around the bottom, and I understand that they eat the shad's eggs. Those carp have increased very fast, and they grow to be big fish, too. One was ketched here last year that weighed twenty-eight pounds. But they have a coarse, rank flesh, and a good many people won't eat 'em."

The fishermen along shore are on the lookout for the first arrival of shad as soon as the chill of the ice is out of the river. A few days of warm south wind, in the early part of April, suffice to start them on their migration from the sea up the river, while a cold north wind will as quickly send them back. The appearance of the vanguard of the unnumbered host of migrating shad is promptly heralded by the newspapers, and the tidings are telegraphed from one end of the Hudson to the other. When the fish go up the river they are in prime condi-

tion; but when they return a few weeks later, after spawning, they are poor and thin.

The demand for shad has grown with the increase of population and improved facilities for shipping them to a distance. Not many years ago statistics showed that in the thirty-five hundred nets in use on the Hudson over a million shad were caught. It is no wonder that the supply tends to fail when the river is fished so energetically. Possibly, too, besides deterrents that have been mentioned, the constant dumping of ashes and cinders by the steamers has prevented the development of those forms of life on which the fish are dependent for food.

The shad formerly ran up to Baker's Falls, about fifty miles above the Troy dam, the building of which has curtailed the migration that much. In those days the farmers came from distant points and camped at the Falls to catch fish for salting down.

The ordinary drift net used for shad fishing in the Hudson, is fully a half-mile long and thirty feet wide, and is made of linen twine. Years ago the fish were taken mainly by seines hauled by a large number of men. One end of the seine was made fast at the shore and the rest was piled in the back end of the boat and

gradually dropped overboard, while the rowers in their course made a long loop out into the river and returned to the shore. But now all the deeper part of the river is fished with the delicate gill-nets, that drift to and fro with the tide, and are managed by two men in a boat. The net is practically invisible to the shad in the obscure river current. It hangs suspended perpendicularly in the water, kept in position by weights at the bottom and by buoys at the top which are attached by cords twelve or fifteen feet long to allow the net to sink out of the reach of the keels of passing vessels. The net stretches nearly across the river. It is thrown out on the ebb tide and drifts down, and then back on the flood tide, and the fish are snared behind the gills in their endeavor to pass through the meshes.

At Alpine they used set nets that as a rule were twenty feet wide and six hundred feet long. Slender oak poles from forty-five to sixty feet in length are driven into the river bottoms at regular intervals, extending in a long row athwart the current. The net is fastened to the down-stream side of these poles at the beginning of each flood tide, and taken in when the flow turns in the other direction. "The ebb tide

would sweep it right out flat on the water," said my fisherman friend, "if we didn't take it in, and it would be all torn to pieces by the driftwood. So we go out every six hours, day and night. There's plenty of work and not much sleep, and I lose weight during the shad run to beat the band. We don't get any chance for napping during the day, because then all our time that isn't taken up by other jobs has to be spent in mending the nets. Sometimes the shad make breaks, or a big sturgeon goes through, or the meshes catch on slivers of the poles. Besides, the river is solid full of klinkers that the nets get afoul of. Worst of all, one of the sloops or other river vessels may cut 'em in two, and perhaps carries away quite a piece that we never get again. My nets are cut that way on an average once a week. Some boats are very accommodating about avoiding our nets, but a good many cap'ns don't care. It doesn't do to say anything to 'em. If you do they tell you they'll give you a better dose next time by going broadside over you. Well, you can't blame 'em much. There's so many nets they get sick and tired of steering round 'em. With the best of care a net is only

good for two seasons. I like a new net. When a shad strikes that he's there.

"It's hard work, this fishing business, and more or less dangerous. Still, I never heard tell of a fisherman getting drowned yet. In fact, the only native of this place who's been drowned within my remembrance was a boy who lived in that next house above here. He was eight years old and out in a boat alone. The fishermen's children do take awful chances—little bits of chaps that ain't fit to go in a boat at all.

"We picked a feller up last summer who was drowned right off this dock. He had a pillow-tick full of stones tied around his waist. The man was well off, but he was a great inventor of patents, and that made him go crazy.

"Another recent drowning occurred a little below here. Two fellers took a permit to camp and they'd no sooner got their tent pitched than they went out in a boat and one of 'em jumped into the water to bathe. But he couldn't swim and the other feller didn't know an oar from a shovel, and as he couldn't manage the boat to be of any help, the chap in the water drowned.

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"The river is a great place for accidents, and some of 'em are very curious. Near Clinton Point there's a conical shaped rock that rises high up just a little back from the water. Once a young man and a young woman were on the rock, and some of their friends who were not far behind, called to them not to get too near the edge. The young couple made some joking answer and a moment later they disappeared from sight. Their friends ran to see what had happened and looked down the steep side of the precipice. No one was in sight except three or four boatmen on the shore of the river. The people up above shouted and told the boatmen of the sudden vanishing of the young couple, but the boatmen hadn't seen nor heard anything unusual. They all joined in the search, but they found no trace of the missing ones, and their disappearance has been a mystery ever since.

"A queer thing of a different sort had to do with the river right here. It was in Civil War time. I was somewhere on earth but too small to remember much, and I'm telling you what my father told me. The river was frozen over solid for forty days, and a man started a beer saloon right in the middle of the stream. It was quite a thing to go out to his hut and have a

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drink. The proprietor stayed there till his stove melted through the ice."

In the fall an occasional fisherman makes a business of catching striped bass; and herring, perch, white fish and young blue fish are caught to a varying extent. Carp are the only fish that seem to be increasing. Sturgeon, the giants of the river fish tribe, are becoming rare. They are monsters of uncouth appearance, with curious horny projections along the sides, and they spend much of the time rooting and feeding in the mud at the bottom of the river. Ordinarily they are caught in a strong gill-net. The flesh is coarse, yet not unpalatable if properly cooked.

Albany, in particular, used to be famous for its sturgeon, and was sometimes in derision called "Sturgeonville," while the fish itself was known as "Albany beef." A single sturgeon sometimes attains a weight of nearly five hundred pounds, and a length of eight feet. In the old days the price of a sturgeon was as low as a jackknife, and they were then caught in large quantities for their oil. This oil was used for the same purposes as sperm whale oil, and was considered especially good for cuts and burns.



A Colonial home at the foot of the Palisades

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The Indians found the bays and shallows of the river prolific breeding places for oysters, and to some of the tribes the bivalves are reputed to have been a chief source of sustenance. This plentiful and cheap oyster supply was likewise a great boon to the poorer people of New York in the early years, but the oyster industry in the Hudson has long been decadent. Little fleets of boats, whose occupants were wielding the long ungainly poles that served to bring up the oysters from the river bed, were formerly often seen; but they are yearly becoming less.

One of my fishermen acquaintances at Alpine rowed me across the river to Yonkers when he carried over his day's catch of shad. There were only a dozen or so and they did not half fill the basket into which he had thrown them. "It's not much like the old days," he said, "when I've known 'em to take eight hundred shad at a single lift of the net."

Not the least of Yonker's claims to interest is its name. This originated back in the time of the Dutch domination. The first person to acquire the manor that included this territory was a man of comparative youth, and his little settlement was popularly known as the "Colony of the Jonkheer's," the final word being equiva-

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lent to the "Young Lord's." It came into his possession in 1652, but he shortly afterward returned to Holland. About three decades later it passed into the hands of Frederick Philipse, who, with his other lands, was lord of a domain that would put to shame the patrimony of many a prince. Presently he married a wealthy widow and was the richest man in the Colonies. His dwelling was at Tarrytown, though a manor-house in which his descendants lived was built at Yonkers.

In the Revolution while two British frigates were at anchor just off shore, some Americans rowed out of the creek that flowed through the village towing a large tender filled with combustibles. They intended to place it alongside of the frigates as a fire-ship, but the English sailors kept it off by means of spars, and a heavy fire of grape and canister compelled the patriots to withdraw and seek shelter.

In 1813, what would now include all the central portion of the city was sold at auction for \$56,000. On the entire estate of 320 acres there were then less than a dozen houses. For three decades more Yonkers continued to be an insignificant hamlet, and at the end of that time the gray old manor-house, a church, a

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few indifferent dwellings and a single sloop at a small wharf comprised the whole borough. But as soon as the operation of the Hudson River Railroad began there was a lively demand for property in the locality and the subsequent growth of the place has been rapid. Among the eminent people who have made it their home was Samuel J. Tilden, a candidate for the presidency in the contested election which was finally decided in favor of Hayes. Here he spent the declining years of his busy and influential life at "Graystone," as he called his granite-walled mansion. The grounds around it are especially noteworthy for the magnificent trees that grow in almost forest-like profusion along the avenues of approach and on the slopes that descend to the river.

VII

THE TAPPAN SEA

THE first portion of the name of this stretch of the Hudson comes from a tribe of Indians that inhabited the west shore, and it is a "Sea" because the river here is so extraordinarily wide. It is ten miles long and has an average breadth of two and a half miles. The water is brackish—a mingling of fresh water from the hills with salt water from the ocean. The graceful and varied horizon line and the silvery haze that commonly envelops the distance make its aspect very charming. At the southern end the Palisades rise in majesty, and near the north end, on the western side, are the superb cliffs of the promontory known as Point-no-Point, or Hook Mountain.

This little sea is a famous cruising place for ghosts and goblins, and all the region is rich with legends. For instance, there is the story of Rambout Van Dam, the unresting oarsman whom some witchery compels to never-ending labor on the tides of this inland sea. He was a

roistering youth who counted neither distance nor exertion of any consequence when a pleasure was in prospect. His home was at Spuyten Duyvil, and yet when he heard there was to be a quilting frolic at Kakiat, a secluded hamlet hidden among the hills near the north end of the Tappan Sea, he rowed all that long way up the river to be present. Apparently he did not find this pull very fatiguing after all, for at the merry-making he danced and drank with a vigor that was not surpassed by any one else present.

It was a Saturday night, and the hour of twelve came before he had any thought that he had lingered so long. Then he started for home. His companions warned him against the perils of Sabbath-breaking which was considered a cardinal sin. But Rambout was confident and reckless and disregarded every warning. He embarked in his boat swearing that he would not land till he reached Spuyten Duyvil; and he has not arrived there even yet. Because of his desecration of the Sabbath he is doomed to journey on the broad river until the day of judgment. Often in the still twilight of a summer evening, when the opposite hills throw their purple shadows half across the river, a

low sound is heard as of the steady, vigorous pull of oars, though not a boat is to be descried. The rower is Rambout Van Dam of graceless memory, but whether he is now a ghost, or is still flesh and blood, none can say.

Another apparition that frequents these waters is the Storm-ship. Some people have doubted the existence of this phantom craft and class it with fabulous monsters and mental hallucinations, but these are not people who have navigated the waters of the Tappan Sea at night. Irving tells its story substantially as follows:

“In the golden age of the province of the New Netherlands, when under the sway of Wouter Van Twiller, the people of the Manhattoes were alarmed one sultry afternoon by a tremendous storm of thunder and lightning. The rain fell in torrents. It seemed as if the thunder rattled over the very roofs of the houses. The lightning was seen to play about the church of St. Nicholas, and to strive three times in vain to strike its weather-cock. Garret Van Horne’s new chimney was split almost from top to bottom; and Doffue Middleberger was struck speechless from his bald-faced mare as he was riding into town.

“Great was the terror of the good old women of the Manhattoes. They gathered their children together, and took refuge in the cellars, after having hung a shoe on the iron point of every bedpost, lest it should attract the lightning. At length the storm abated, the thunder sank to a growl, the setting sun, breaking from under the fringed borders of the clouds, made the broad bosom of the bay gleam like a sea of molten gold.

“Then word was given from the fort that a ship was standing up the bay. It passed from mouth to mouth, and street to street, and soon put the little capital in a bustle. The arrival of a ship in those early times of the settlement, was an event of vast importance to the inhabitants. It brought news from the land of their birth, from which they were so completely severed. To the yearly ship, too, they looked for their supply of luxuries, of comforts and almost of necessities. The good vrouw could not have her new cap or new gown until the arrival of the ship; the burgomaster waited for his pipe; the schoolboy for his top and marbles; and the lordly landholder for the bricks with which he was to build his new mansion.

“The news from the fort therefore, brought all the populace down to the Battery. It was not exactly the time when the ship had been expected to arrive, and the circumstance was a matter of some speculation. Here and there might be seen a burgomaster of slow and pompous gravity, giving his opinion with great confidence to a crowd of old women and idle boys. At another place was a knot of weather-beaten fellows who had been seamen or fishermen, and were great authorities on such occasions. But the man most looked up to, and followed and watched was Hans Van Pelt, an old Dutch sea-captain retired from service, the nautical oracle of the place. He reconnoitered the ship through an ancient telescope, hummed a tune, and said nothing. A hum, however, from Hans Van Pelt had more weight with the public than a speech from another man.

“The ship was a stout, round vessel, with high bow and poop. The evening sun gilded her bellying canvas, as she came riding over the long billows. The sentinel who had given notice of her approach declared that he first got sight of her when she was in the center of the bay; and that she broke suddenly on his sight, just as if she had come out of the bosom of the

black thunder-cloud. The bystanders looked at Hans Van Pelt, to see what he would say to this report. Hans Van Pelt screwed his mouth closer together, and said nothing; on which some shook their heads, and others shrugged their shoulders.

“The ship was now repeatedly hailed, but made no reply, and passing by the fort, stood on up the Hudson. Trade regulations did not allow any vessel to go up the river without a permit, and a gun was fired by Hans Van Pelt, the garrison not being expert in artillery. The shot seemed absolutely to pass through the ship, and to skip along the water on the other side, but no notice was taken of it! What was strange, she had all her sails set, and sailed right against wind and tide, which were both down the river. Hans Van Pelt, who was harbor-master, ordered his boat, and set off to board her; but after rowing two or three hours he returned without success. Sometimes he would get within one or two hundred yards of her, and then in a twinkling, she would be half a mile off. Some said it was because his oarsmen, who were rather pursy and short-winded, stopped every now and then to take breath and spit on their hands; but this, it is probable,

was a mere scandal. He got near enough, however, to see the crew, who were all dressed in Dutch style, the officers in doublets and high hats and feathers. Not a word was spoken by anyone on board. They stood as motionless as so many statues, and the ship seemed as if left to her own government. Thus she kept on, away up the river, lessening and lessening in the evening sunshine, until she faded from sight, like a little white cloud melting in the summer sky.

“The appearance of this ship threw the governor into one of the deepest doubts that ever beset him in the whole course of his administration. Fears were entertained for the security of the infant settlements on the river, lest this might be an enemy’s ship in disguise. The governor sat in his chair of state, smoking his long pipe, and listening to all that his counsellors had to say on a subject about which they knew nothing.

“Messengers were dispatched to different places on the river; but they returned without any tidings—the ship had made no port. Day after day, and week after week elapsed, but she never returned down the Hudson. However, the captains of the sloops seldom arrived without bringing some report of having seen the strange

ship at different parts of the river; sometimes near the Palisadoes, sometimes off Croton Point, and sometimes in the Highlands. The crews of the sloops generally differed among themselves in their accounts of these apparitions; but that may have arisen from the uncertain situations in which they saw her. Sometimes it was by the flashes of the thunder storm lighting up a pitchy night, and giving glimpses of her careering across the Tappan Sea, or the wide waste of Haverstraw Bay. At one moment she would appear close on them, as if likely to run them down, and would throw them into great bustle and alarm; but the next flash would show her far off, always sailing against the wind. Sometimes, in quiet moonlight nights, she would be seen under some high bluff of the Highlands, all in deep shadow, excepting her topsails glittering in the moonbeams. By the time the voyagers reached the place, no ship was to be seen; and when they had passed on for some distance, and looked back, behold! there she was again, with her topsails in the moonlight! Her appearance was always just after, or just before, or just in the midst of unruly weather; and she was known among

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the skippers and voyagers of the Hudson by the name of 'the storm-ship.'

"It would be endless to repeat the conjectures and opinions uttered on the subject. Some quoted cases of ships seen off the coast of New England, navigated by witches and goblins. Others suggested that if it really was supernatural it might be Hendrick Hudson's vessel, the *Half Moon*. Indeed it had already been reported that he and his crew haunted the Catskill Mountains, and it seemed very reasonable to suppose that his ship might bear the shadowy crew to their periodical revels.

"The storm-ship continued a matter of popular belief and marvelous anecdote through the whole time of the Dutch government. Since that time we have no authentic accounts of her; though it is said she still haunts the Highlands, and cruises about Point-no-Point. People who live along the river insist that they sometimes see her in summer moonlight; and that in a deep still midnight they have heard the chant of her crew; but sights and sounds are so deceptive along the mountainous shores, and about the wide bays and long reaches of this great river that I have very strong doubts on the subject."



The Tappan Sea at Irvington



Near the southern end of the Tappan Sea, just back of the west shore hills, is historic old Tappan where André was hung. As a rule American feeling toward that ill-fated youth has always been kindly and sympathetic, but when Cyrus W. Field erected a monument at Tappan a few decades ago to commemorate André's association with the town in those eventful days of the Revolution some rampant patriot with more zeal than sense promptly applied an explosive and destroyed it.

Across the river is Dobbs Ferry. Its name dates back to the time when Jeremiah Dobbs, one of the first settlers in the region, had a shanty on Willow Point and eked out his modest living by carrying chance travellers across the river in his dugout. The modern inhabitants of the place are reputed to be burdened with a keen regret that this ancient ferryman did not have a different name to bestow on the town that has grown up there, and they have even made a number of efforts to get the legislature to authorize the use of a more euphonious cognomen. At the various public meetings held to agitate the question several substitutes have been suggested. For instance, it was urged that the town should take the name

of one of the three captors of Major André—say Paulding or Van Wart. As to Van Wart, somebody proposed that they drop the Van and call the place “Wart on the Hudson.” The agitation thus far has failed of success, and Dobbs Ferry is still on the map.

Near the north end of the Tappan Sea is another town that has been much disturbed over its name. Here, by the shore, is the famous Sing Sing State Prison, and behind it on the hills is a village, also called Sing Sing until recently. Naturally the prison name does not arouse in the minds of the general public associations that are especially agreeable. Everyone knows of the prison, comparatively few have ever heard of the village; and a dweller in the latter could scarcely avow to a stranger that Sing Sing was his home without an explanation. The place itself was never a penal colony as outsiders have been prone to imagine. It has grown to be a populous and attractive suburb of New York, and from its slopes commands a very beautiful view of the river. The prison continues to be Sing Sing, this odd designation being a corruption of a Mohican word, Ossining, which is descriptive of the rocky nature of the site; but the town has adopted the original

form of the name. Sing Sing prison was founded in 1826 when a state official brought one hundred convicts to the place and set them at work to wall themselves in. They were three years in completing the main building. Nearly two thousand persons now find in this great prison the quiet which complete seclusion from society affords.

Ossining's northern boundary is the Croton River, chiefly important as the sole source of the water supply of New York City for more than a generation. The river is a mild, vernal stream emptying into a bay of the same name. Not far back is the reservoir from which the "old" aqueduct carries the water to the city. This aqueduct was finished in 1842. It is of brick and is placed on or near the surface, occasionally tunnelling under high ground and again spanning some ravine on arches. In the course of time it proved inadequate and a second aqueduct was completed in 1890. This is of brick also, but is laid in an almost straight line from Croton Lake to the Harlem through the solid rock at an average depth below the surface of five hundred feet. As many as ten thousand men were employed on it at times, and the cost was twenty-five million dollars. Nothing to

equal it in magnitude of engineering had then been accomplished in any other part of the world.

Above the bay which receives the Croton is the old manor-house of the Van Cortlandts, which is not only interesting on account of its age and historic associations, but because it is haunted by two ghosts. One of them wanders through the ancient rooms with a sound of rustling silks, and the other treads heavily along the halls and up the stairways.

The site of the manor-house was once occupied by an Indian fort in which Chief Croton, the sachem who ruled in the immediate neighborhood, made his last stand against a foray of his fierce enemies from the north. He fought with desperate valor amid a shower of arrows, and half-hidden by the smoke and flames of his burning palisades. One by one his companions fell, till he stood alone and wounded. Then, as his foes rushed forward, he fell headlong in the blazing fire. He died, yet it is said that in great crises he has again and again appeared urging men to courageous deeds.

Across the river from Sing Sing is Point-no-Point, which, as its name indicates, is the bluntest sort of a promontory. Back of it, a



Croton River

mile or more from the river, is Rockland Lake, a large sheet of water whence comes a considerable portion of the ice used in New York City. The ice is conveyed from the lake to the river by a cable railway, and continues its journey in huge barges. At Rockland Lake the ice business of the metropolis is said to have originated. The delivery of the first shipments that reached New York was made in springless, one-horse carts, and the entire capital invested in the business was at the start only two thousand dollars.

VIII

THE LAND OF IRVING

TO a very large degree the peculiar sentiment and romance that are associated with the Hudson are due to Washington Irving. The river may almost be said to have been discovered by him. He found a stream of wonderful beauty and of much fascination in its historic and legendary lore; but the beauty was uncelebrated, and the history and the legends unrecorded. It was his pen which popularized the romantic interest of "the river that he loved and glorified." Whether he was writing fiction or simply interpreting facts, in either case his lively imagination and gentle humor imparted an atmosphere that will always color the public impression of the region. He was born in 1783 on the banks of the river, in the then small city which was gradually expanding northward from the lower end of Manhattan Island, and he died in 1859 at "Sunnyside," as he called the home he had established on the shores of the Tappan Sea. Sunnyside is rather less than

a mile from the village of Irvington, which was so named in his honor a few years before his death.

Irving bought the place in 1835. He had returned from a sojourn of many years abroad with a desire to indulge in the pleasures of a real home of his own, where he could have quiet and enjoy the companionship of some of his near relatives. The place he chose was merely a ten-acre farm on which stood a small stone house. It had formerly belonged to a man named Wolfert Acker and was known as "Wolfert's Roost," the latter word meaning rest. Irving's original intention was that the place should be nothing more than a summer retreat, inexpensive and simply furnished; but he did much more than he at first had in mind doing, and it became his permanent residence. He remodeled the cottage and it acquired a tower, and a whimsical weathervane said to have come from a windmill at the gate of Rotterdam in Holland. But whatever changes were made its quaint Dutch characteristics were carefully preserved and, as the author observed, it continued to be "as full of angles and corners as an old cocked hat." He made it one of the snuggest and most picturesque residences on the river. With

its sheltering groves and secluded walks and grassy glades and its wide-reaching view of the river it was an ideal home for such a man of letters as Irving. In a short time it had become the dearest spot on earth to him, and he always left it with reluctance and returned to it with eager delight.

Since Irving's time the house has been greatly enlarged, but the most characteristic portion of the old residence has been retained, and the newer part is in the rear, so that Sunnyside in its general aspect is the same as Irving left it. The coziness and retirement of the house are delightful. It is like a human bird's nest. The grounds are ample, with many old and lofty trees, and include a brook that courses down a rocky hollow and then lingers through the lush weeds and grasses of a little meadow. Between the knoll on which the house stands and the river, the railroad intervenes, but is for the most part screened from sight by a thick growth of trees.

In telling the story of Wolfert's Roost, Irving says that the builder of the house, Wolfert Acker, "was a man whose aim through life had been to live in peace and quiet. For this he had emigrated from Holland, driven abroad by

family feuds and wrangling neighbors. It was his doom, in fact, to meet a head-wind at every turn, and to be kept in a constant fume and fret by the perverseness of mankind. Had he served on a modern jury, he would have been sure to have eleven unreasonable men opposed to him. Wolfert retired to this fastness in the wilderness, and inscribed over his door his favorite motto, "Lust in Rust" (pleasure in quiet). The mansion was thence called Wolfert's Rust, but by the uneducated who did not understand Dutch, Wolfert's Roost, probably from its having a weathercock perched on every gable.

"Wolfert had brought with him a wife, and it soon passed into a proverb throughout the neighborhood that the cock of the Roost was the most henpecked bird in the country. His house, too, was reputed to be harassed by Yankee witchcraft. When the weather was quiet everywhere else, the wind, it was said, would howl about the gables; witches and warlocks would whirl on the weathercocks and scream down the chimneys; nay, it was even hinted that Wolfert's wife was in league with the enemy, and used to ride on a broomstick to a witches' Sabbath in Sleepy Hollow.

This, however, was all mere scandal, founded perhaps on her occasionally flourishing a broomstick in the course of a curtain lecture, or raising a storm within doors, as termagant wives are apt to do."

During the troublous time of the Revolutionary War the Roost was the stronghold of Jacob Van Tassel. It stood between the British and American lines in the very heart of the debatable ground, which was much infested by bandits. To make matters worse the Tappan Sea was domineered over by the foe. "British ships of war were anchored here and there in the wide expanses of the river. Stout galleys armed with eighteen pounders, and navigated with sails and oars, cruised about like hawks, while rowboats made descents on the land, and foraged the country bordering the shore.

"It was a sore grievance to the yeomanry along the Tappan Sea to behold that little Mediterranean ploughed by hostile prows, and the noble river of which they were so proud reduced to a state of thralldom. Councils of war were held to devise ways and means of dislodging the enemy. Here and there on a point of land, a mud-work would be thrown up, and an old fieldpiece mounted, with which a knot

of rustic artillerymen would fire away for a long summer's day at some frigate dozing at anchor far out of reach.

“Jacob Van Tassel, stout of frame and bold of heart, was a prominent man in these operations. On a row of hooks above the fireplace of the Roost reposed a goose-gun of unparalleled longitude, with which it was said he could kill a wild goose half way across the Tappan Sea. When the belligerent feeling was strong on Jacob, he would take down his gun and prowl along the shore, dodging behind rocks and trees, watching for hours together any ship or galley at anchor or becalmed, as a valorous mouser will watch a rat hole. So sure as a boat approached the shore, bang went the great goose-gun, sending on board a shower of slugs and buck-shot, and away scuttled Jacob Van Tassel through some woody ravine. As the Roost stood in a lonely situation, and might be attacked, he guarded against surprise by making loop-holes in the stone walls. His wife was as stout-hearted as himself, and could load as fast as he could fire; and his sister, a redoubtable widow, was a match, as he said, for the stoutest man in the country. Thus garrisoned, his little castle was fitted to stand a siege,

and Jacob was the man to defend it to the last charge of powder.

“In the process of time the Roost became one of the secret stations of the Water Guard. This was an aquatic corps organized to range the waters of the Hudson, and keep watch on the movements of the enemy. It was composed of nautical men of the river, and hardy youngsters of the adjacent country, expert at pulling an oar or handling a musket. They were provided with whale boats, long and sharp, and formed to lie lightly on the water, and be rowed with great rapidity. In these they would lurk out of sight by day, in nooks and bays, and behind points of land, keeping a sharp lookout on the British ships. At night they rowed about in pairs, pulling quietly along with muffled oars, under the shadow of land, or gliding like specters about frigates and guard ships to cut off any boat that might be sent to shore.

“At length Jacob Van Tassel in the course of one of his forays fell into the hands of the enemy and the Roost, as a pestilent rebel nest, was marked out for signal punishment. An armed vessel came to anchor in front; a boat full of men paddled to shore. The garrison flew to arms, that is to say, to mops, broomsticks,

shovels, tongs, and all kinds of domestic weapons—for unluckily the great goose-gun was absent with its owner. Above all, a vigorous defense was made with that most potent of female weapons, the tongue. Never did invaded hen roost make a more vociferous outcry. It was all in vain. The house was plundered, fire was set to each corner, and in a few moments its blaze shed a baleful light far over the Tappan Sea.

“Jacob was detained a prisoner in New York for the greater part of the war. In the meantime the Roost remained a melancholy ruin, its stone walls and brick chimneys alone standing, the resort of bats and owls. When the war was over Jacob Van Tassel sought the scenes of his former triumphs and mishaps, rebuilt the Roost, restored his goose-gun to the hooks over the fireplace, and reared once more on high the glittering weathercocks.

“The Roost still exists. The stout Jacob Van Tassel, it is true, sleeps with his fathers, yet his stronghold still bears the impress of its Dutch origin. Odd rumors have gathered about it as they are apt to do about old mansions, like moss and weather stains. The shade of Wolfert Acker walks unquiet rounds at night in

the orchard; and a white figure has now and then been seen seated at a window and gazing at the moon, from a room in which a young lady is said to have died of love and green apples."

Tarrytown, which formerly included Sunnyside within its boundaries is two miles to the north. It is a beautiful and long established place with considerable trade and manufacturing. The first two syllables of the name are said to have been metamorphosed from a Dutch word meaning wheat, which was a leading product of the district. Irving, however, fancies the name to have been bestowed by the housewives of the adjacent region because their husbands were prone to linger at the village tavern on market days.

During the War of the Revolution, Tarrytown, like other hamlets within the neutral territory was overridden and pillaged, and property and life were in constant hazard. One exciting episode has to do with two sloops that were going down the Hudson loaded with powder and arms for the American army. They discovered several British warships approaching from the opposite direction and hastily put into Tarrytown where they were cornered by the

enemy. A few American soldiers who were in the town worked with great spirit to help unload the stores from the sloops, in spite of a galling fire from the British frigates. Even when two of the enemy's gunboats and four barges crept in to destroy the fugitive vessels Captain Hurlburt with twelve of his brave troopers armed only with swords and pistols, resisted till the last possible moment. But in the end they were driven away. The British had no sooner set the sloops on fire and retired, however, than the intrepid Hurlburt and his men swam out to the burning vessels and extinguished the flames. Their superlative heroism is evident when the nature of the cargoes is remembered and the risk of explosion.

The most notable of all historic events in this part of the Hudson Valley was the capture of Major André—a capture which was a tragic climax both in his life and in that of Benedict Arnold. Incidents began to take a trend that led to the melancholy involving of these two back in the summer of 1778. Arnold was at that time placed in command of Philadelphia, where his blunt and self-willed methods created a good deal of irritation, and where his extravagant style of living was an offence in view of

the distressed condition of the country. No one in that city kept a finer stable of horses or gave more costly dinners than General Arnold. He also engaged in commercial speculations and ran in debt. At the same time he courted and afterward married the reigning belle in the city, one of the most beautiful and fascinating women in America. She was scarcely twenty and he was a widower of thirty-five, with three sons, but his reputation, his gallant bearing and handsome face won the lady. Her father was a prominent Tory. This had an influence in making Arnold less warm in the patriot cause. Besides, his treatment by Congress had been far from generous and his manner of life had led to his being in great need of money. So in April, 1779, he wrote under an assumed name to the English General Clinton describing himself as an American officer of high rank, who through disgust at recent proceedings of Congress might be persuaded to go over to the British, provided he was indemnified for any losses he might incur by so doing. Clinton responded, and the correspondence continued for some time until Arnold gradually determined to obtain the command of an important post, by the surrender of which the country would be



"Sunnyside," the home of Washington Irving

carried back to its old allegiance. The result was that he sought and obtained from Washington, who had always been his warm friend, the command of West Point. Could this vital position be delivered to Clinton the British would gain what Burgoyne failed to get—the control of the Hudson. Thus Arnold, the hero of Saratoga, planned to undo the good work he had done for the American cause on that famous battlefield scarcely more than a hundred miles distant.

A portion of the British army in New York at length embarked ready to go up the Hudson, and the sloop-of-war *Vulture* was sent on ahead bearing Major André for a personal conference with Arnold. On September twenty-first, toward midnight, a boat, rowed by two men with muffled oars, came gliding silently to the side of the *Vulture*. In the stern sat Joshua Hett Smith, a local inhabitant whom Arnold had prevailed on to go to the British vessel and “get a person who was coming from New York with important intelligence.” He returned to the shore with André, and in the still starlight they landed at the foot of a shadowy mountain called the Long Clove—a solitary place, the haunt of the owl and the whip-poor-will.

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Arnold was in waiting among the thickets. He had come thither on horseback accompanied by a mounted servant from Smith's house, which was about two miles below Stony Point on the upland overlooking Haverstraw Bay. While Arnold and André were conferring, Smith remained in the boat and the servant withdrew to a distance with the horses. Hour after hour passed, and at length Smith approached the place of conference and gave warning that it was near daybreak, and the boat would soon be in danger of detection. As the bargain was not yet completed, it was arranged that André should remain on shore till the following night, and the boat was sent to a creek higher up the river. André mounted the servant's horse and set off with Arnold for Smith's house. They had scarcely entered it when they were startled by the booming of cannon. The *Vulture* was being fired on from the opposite shore, and André was dismayed to see the vessel retire down the stream. However, it was certain that she would not go far, and negotiations with Arnold were presently resumed in an upper chamber. It was agreed that immediately on André's return to New York the British were to ascend the river in force.

To obstruct such hostile approach an enormous chain had been stretched across the river; but under pretence of repairs, one link was to be taken out for a few days and its place supplied by a rope which would easily break. The defendant forces were to be so distributed that they could be captured in detail, until Arnold, taking advantage of the apparent defeat, was to surrender the works and his entire command of three thousand men.

Arnold gave André six papers, all but one of them in his own handwriting, containing descriptions of the fortresses and the disposal of the troops. André concealed them between his stockings and the soles of his feet, and about noon Arnold departed to go in his barge ten miles upstream to his headquarters at a mansion across the river from West Point. As evening approached André prepared to return to the *Vulture*. He expected Smith to take him in the boat, but Smith had been alarmed by the firing in the morning and thought this would entail more risk than to try to reach the British lines by land. So the young officer partially disguised himself in some of Smith's clothes, and the two crossed the river at King's Ferry, and pursued their journey on horseback. This

region between the opposing forces, with its forest-clad hills, fertile vales and abundant streams, was naturally very beautiful and prosperous; but it was now much infested by robbers, one set of whom was known as the "Cowboys" because they were partial to carrying off cattle, and another set as "Skinners," because they took everything they could find. The former fought, or rather marauded, under the Americans; the latter, under the British banner. In the zeal of service, both were apt to make blunders and confound the property of friend and foe. Neither of them in the heat and hurry of a foray had time to ascertain the politics of a horse or a cow which they were driving off; nor when they wrung the neck of a rooster, did they concern themselves whether he crowed for Congress or King George. By these the country had been desolated, houses were plundered and dismantled, and inclosures broken down, so that the fields lay waste and the roads were grass-grown.

To check the enormities of the marauders a confederacy was formed among the yeomanry who had suffered from them. It was composed for the most part of farmers' sons, bold, hard-riding lads, well-armed and well-mounted, and

they undertook to clear the region of "Skinners" and "Cowboys" and all other border vermin.

The more André's guide meditated on the state of affairs roundabout, the more fearful he became of trouble, and he presently obliged his impatient companion to stop for the night at a farmhouse. Before dawn they were on their way again, and when they reached the Croton River which marked the upper boundary of the neutral ground between the contestants, Smith left André to go on alone while he made his way back to Arnold's headquarters and reported that he had escorted his charge to a point whence he could reach the British lines with ease and safety.

André struck into a road that led through Tarrytown, but it happened that certain local residents had set out that morning to waylay a party of "Cowboys," and as André approached the village and came to a place where a small stream crossed the road and ran into a woody dell, a man stepped forth from the bushes and confronted him with a leveled musket. Two other men similarly armed also showed themselves, prepared to second their comrade.

The leader of the three was John Paulding. His career of late had abounded in excitement.

Not long before, while calling on a young woman to whom he was attentive, he had been attacked by a number of Tories, including the lady's brother. He took refuge in a barn from which he fired on his assailants, wounding some of them. That made them keep their distance and parley for his surrender. He finally gave himself up and was turned over to the British and imprisoned in New York. But he managed to escape, and, aided by a negress who disguised him in the green coat of a Hessian soldier, he reached the American lines. A few days later, still wearing the same conspicuous garment, he and his two comrades halted Major André. This they did because he was a stranger about whose purposes they had doubts. The Hessian coat led André to think they were friends of the cause he represented, and he avowed himself to be a British officer travelling on important business. To his dismay, Paulding said that they were Americans, and seizing the bridle of his horse ordered him to dismount. André, who had now recovered his self-possession, endeavored to pass off his previous account of himself as a subterfuge. He declared himself to be a messenger from General Arnold and showed them a pass written by that officer. But

his captors insisted on searching his person and obliged him to take off his coat and vest. They found nothing of any consequence, and would have let him proceed had not Paulding said, "Boys, I am not satisfied—his boots must come off."

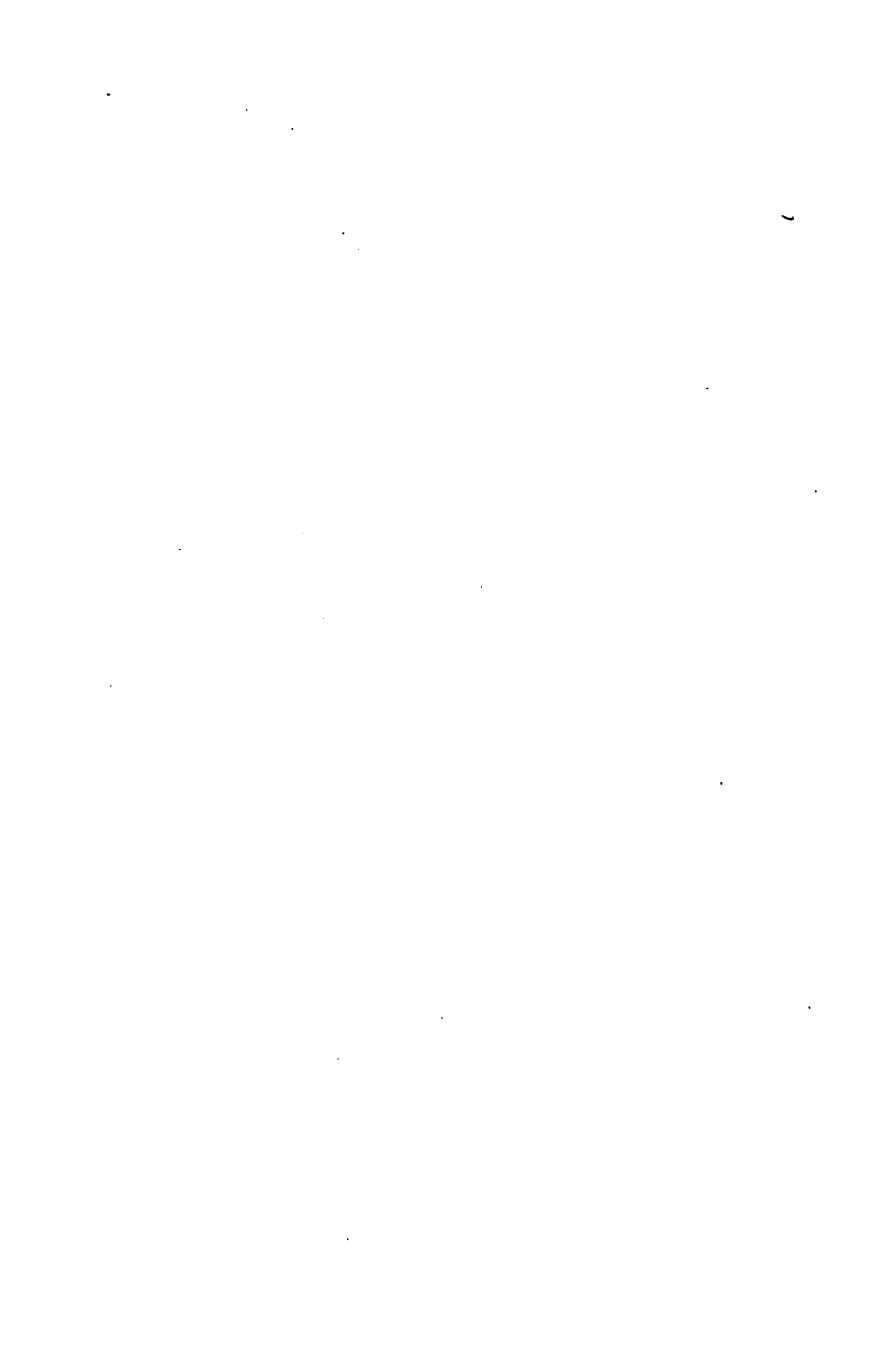
At this André changed color and protested that his boots came off with difficulty and begged that he might not be subjected to such inconvenience and delay. His remonstrances were in vain. He was obliged to sit down, his boots were removed, and the concealed papers discovered. Paulding looked them over and exclaimed, "He is a spy!"

André offered ten guineas to be allowed to pursue his journey but Paulding responded, "If you offered ten thousand guineas you could not stir one step."

The young men took him up the river and delivered him to Colonel Jameson in command at North Castle. This officer did not clearly comprehend the entire purport of the papers, and not only sent word of the capture to Washington but also to Arnold. The latter was at the breakfast table with Alexander Hamilton and other members of Washington's staff when the courier entered and handed him Jameson's

letter. With astonishing presence of mind he glanced at the letter, put it in his pocket and finished the remark he had been making. Then, rising, he said that he was suddenly called across the river to West Point, and ordered his barge to be manned. His wife detected something unusual in his manner, and as he left the room she hurried after him to their chamber. He told her he was a ruined man and must fly for his life; and when she screamed and fainted in his arms he laid her on the bed, kissed his baby boy sleeping in the cradle, ran to the yard, leaped on the horse of the messenger which stood saddled at the door, and galloped down a bypath to his six-oared barge. The oarsmen were soon pulling him down the river. It seemed probable that the *Vulture* would still be waiting for André somewhere below, and a brisk row of eighteen miles brought him to that vessel. The commander was wondering at André's long absence. When he understood what had happened he weighed anchor and sailed for New York.

A few days later André was taken across the river to Tappan where he was tried by a military commission who sentenced him to death as a spy. He was a man of varied and graceful





The house in which Arnold and André met on "Treason Hill"

talents—a poet, a musician, an artist—and his engaging manners made him universally liked, but on October second he was hanged. His remains were buried at Tappan near the spot where he was executed, and there remained until 1821 when they were disinterred and removed to Westminster Abbey. His fate appeals strongly to the sympathies, yet it appears doubtful if either his career or his melancholy death called for this final distinction.

Arnold's reward for his treachery was six thousand pounds and a brigadiership in the British army. Within three months he was sent on a marauding expedition into Virginia where he one day asked a captain whom he had captured, "What do you think would be my fate if my misguided countrymen were to take me prisoner?"

"They would cut off the leg that was wounded at Saratoga and bury it with the honors of war, and the rest of you they would hang on a gibbet," was the reply.

After the war ended Arnold and his wife made England their home. Their descendants have since won for themselves an honorable place there, but Arnold himself, disgraced and almost friendless, died miserably in London in

1801. It is said that he had always kept the uniform he wore at the time he escaped to the *Vulture* and that when he felt his last moments coming he put it on and said, "Let me die in this old uniform in which I fought my battles. May God forgive me for wearing any other!"

The monument that marks the vicinity of André's capture is on Broadway, a continuation of the same Broadway that starts at the lower end of New York City. It is in the fine residence section of Tarrytown, and its surroundings have lost all rustic simplicity and are no aid to the imagination in conjuring up the scene as it was when the spy was captured. This capture took place beneath a great whitewood which afterward was known as the André tree, and on the very day that Arnold died this tree is said to have been struck by lightning.

A short walk farther on is the famous Sleepy Hollow, described by Irving as, "a little valley or rather a lap of land among high hills, which is one of the quietest places in the whole world. A small brook glides through it, with just murmur enough to lull one to repose, and the occasional whistle of a quail, or tapping of a woodpecker, is almost the only sound that ever breaks in on the uniform tranquillity.

"Here were small farms, each having its little portion of meadow and cornfield; its orchard of gnarled and sprawling apple trees; its garden in which the rose, the marigold, and hollyhock, grew sociably with the cabbage, the pea and the pumpkin; each had its low-eaved mansion redundant with children, with an old hat nailed against the wall for the house-keeping wren, and a coop on the grass plot where the motherly hen clucked to her vagrant broods; each had its stone well, with a moss-covered bucket suspended from the long balancing pole, while within doors resounded the eternal hum of the spinning wheel."

The valley is now suburban, and the placid old Dutch homesteads have disappeared. The bridge where Ichabod Crane came to grief when pursued by the headless horseman is no longer a rude wooden structure in a deep ravine overhung by trees and vines, but is a substantial arch of stone, across which runs a broad, exposed highway. Down the stream are the ruins of a mill and the ancient Philipse manor-house, but the most satisfying relic of the past is the little Dutch church on a knoll above the bridge. This was erected about 1690, and is now the oldest church building in

use in New York State, and one of the quaintest and best preserved historic buildings on this continent. Its walls are two feet thick. They are partly of the rough country stone and partly of brick brought from Holland. Not till after the Revolution was English substituted for Dutch in the services.

"A weathercock graced each end of the church," says Irving, in recording his early memories of the building, "one perched over the belfry, the other over the chancel. As usual with ecclesiastical weathercocks, each pointed a different way; and there was a perpetual contradiction between them on all points of windy doctrine.

"The congregation was of a truly rural character. Dutch sunbonnets and honest homespun still prevailed. Everything was in primitive style, even to the bucket of water and tin cup near the door in summer to assuage the thirst caused by the heat of the weather and the drought of the sermon.

"The drowsy influence of Sleepy Hollow was apt to breathe into this sacred edifice; and now and then an elder might be seen with his handkerchief over his face to keep off the flies, and apparently listening to the dominie; but really



The old Dutch church at Sleepy Hollow



sunk into a summer slumber, lulled by the sultry notes of the locusts in the neighboring trees."

The church is surrounded by the graves of many generations—those of the early settlers clustering thickly about the edifice, while the newer graves overspread the long slope rising beyond. One grave with a peculiar interest is that of Captain John Buckout, who with his wife Sarah, could count two hundred and forty children and grandchildren—a statement graven large on his tombstone. Near the summit of the hill is Irving's grave, and a well-beaten path leads from the church to where he rests amid the scenes which his magic pen has made famous.

IX

HAVERSTRAW AND STONY POINT

THE ferries on the Hudson between New York and Albany average about twenty miles apart, and often when I wanted to go from one side to some place directly opposite, my choice lay between a long and inconvenient journey around, or hiring a special conveyance. Thus it happened that I voyaged to Haverstraw by motor boat from a village on the east shore. The river here is at its widest—four miles is the official figure, but my skipper called it five and I suppose charged accordingly. The sun had set, and the western haze was suffused with color. As we cut rapidly through the water the shore toward which we were going became less vague and I could see the clustering buildings of a town with lofty hills of irregular outline behind. The most conspicuous peak in this range of hills is known as High Tor, and a local legend relates that one of the wise men of the East long ago found his way to America and on the summit of

High Tor built an altar. This aroused the Indians to demand that he should worship as they did, and when he refused, they were so enraged that they prepared to attack and kill him. But he was saved by a miracle—for an earthquake opened a great gaping crack in the earth and engulfed his enemies. This crack is the channel through which the Hudson now flows.

At the edge of the Haverstraw shore, for fully two miles, there is an almost continuous row of rough, wide-spreading sheds used by the brickmakers, and from many of them the smoke was lazily rising. On their landward side the clay sediment, which had been deposited in this nook in the bygone time when the stream was wider and deeper than now, has been removed leaving a vast hollow. The workers even build coffer dams out into the river to rescue the valuable brick clay. Much more than half of all the brick made along the whole course of the river comes from here. The clay has been excavated in places till the buildings of the town are close to the precipitous bank, and their situation seems in some instances decidedly perilous.

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One autumn afternoon a few years ago a Haverstraw policeman noticed that the walls of a brick building near the edge of an excavation were cracking, and he saw a loosened brick fall out. He went to the owner of the property and told him there was going to be a landslide; and as the clay there had been taken out to a depth of one hundred and eighty feet the prospect was quite disturbing. Warning was given to the families that lived in the threatened neighborhood, but they had dwelt so long in the vicinity of the danger that they thought the alarm needless and went to bed as usual. About midnight, however, the clay bank gave way carrying down houses and people into the frightful chasm. Rescuers were soon on hand, and they were busy amidst the debris when there was a second slide that overwhelmed everyone in its path. The wreckage caught on fire, and the scene of devastation was brightly lighted. About a dozen houses had gone down into the depths and a score of lives were lost. Among those who perished were a father and mother. When the first houses slid into the chasm theirs hung on the verge and they had time to take their children to a point of safety. That done they went back to get their bank

book. They were never seen afterward and not even their bodies were recovered.

This experience of the town would seem to have been severe enough to make sure of adequate precautions for the future; yet the clay diggers still take chances, and in places the great excavation is creeping dangerously near certain streets. Indeed, predictions are made that Haverstraw will presently have another appalling catastrophe.

Not far north of the town is the Joshua Hett Smith house on "Treason Hill" where Arnold and André completed their nefarious bargain. I had an impression that the hill would be a barren and blasted tract, and that the house would be gloomy and forbidding; but on the contrary the upland is pleasantly pastoral, fine trees are plentiful, and the house is a simple but attractive mansion commanding a wide view of the valley.

Two miles farther on, where Stony Point thrusts its rugged headland out into the river, the broad Haverstraw Bay ends and the stream is scarcely a half mile wide. The projecting shore opposite is Verplank's Point. Here in Colonial days was King's Ferry, the greatest public ferry on the Hudson. It was extremely

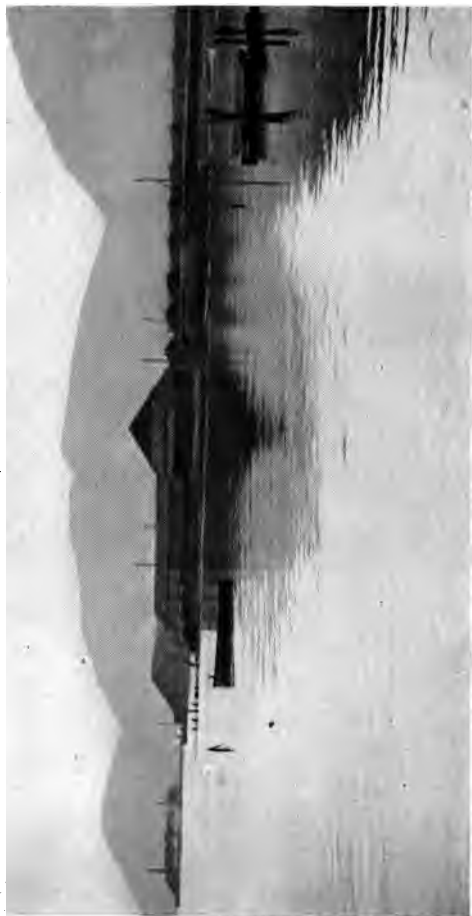
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useful in the military movements of the Continental Army, and partly for its defence and partly to prevent the enemy's ships from passing up the river fortifications were started in 1779 on the two Points to command the narrow channel.

The British were about to make a supreme effort to gain control of the Hudson, and Sir Henry Clinton with a detachment of troops landed at Haverstraw and marched against Stony Point. Workmen were building redoubts on its summit and occupied a blockhouse there. At the approach of the enemy they set fire to the blockhouse and fled to the hills. Sir Henry took possession, and during the night artillery was landed, and with vast exertion was dragged up and mounted in the empty embrasures. At daylight a cannonade was opened on the Point across the river, which was at the same time assailed by troops from the rear, and compelled to surrender.

The British immediately took up the work started by the Americans and completed the redoubts on Stony Point and armed them so stoutly as to make it "a little Gibraltar," which they boasted was impregnable. The garrison consisted of six hundred men.





Some of the brickyards bordering Haverstraw Bay

Washington realized that the British capture and retention of this stronghold would have a depressing effect on the sentiment of the country, and, more important still, he wanted to strike a blow that would cause a marauding party that was devastating Connecticut to be withdrawn. He discussed the possibility of dislodging the invaders with his officers and asked General Anthony Wayne if he would attempt to storm it.

"I'll storm hell, sir, if you'll make the plans," was Wayne's reply.

So the enterprise was entrusted to "Mad Anthony," a nickname bestowed on him by the soldiers because of his desperate bravery. His madness was by no means blind and rash, for he was equipped with quick eyes and a cool head as well as with impetuous valor.

The rocky, precipitous Point was two hundred feet high, and was washed on three sides by the waters of the Hudson. On the fourth side it was separated from the mainland by a deep morass over which ran a single causeway that was covered at high tide. Twelve hundred men were placed at Wayne's disposal and he prepared for a night assault. Every dog within three miles was killed that no warning bark might alarm the garrison, and not a gun was

loaded lest an untimely shot should betray their approach. The officers were ordered to put to death instantly any man who should attempt to load his musket or break from the ranks. Bayonets were to be the chief dependence. Until within a few months this weapon had been lightly valued by the American soldiers. They did not know how to use it and often threw it away, or merely retained it as a cooking utensil, holding on its point the beef they roasted before their camp fires. But a change had come owing to the training of Baron Steuben who the year before had become inspector-general of the army, and now Wayne's men were about to make one of the most spirited bayonet charges known to history.

At midnight, the fifteenth of July, they were close to the Point in two columns ready for the work that had been planned. Each company was preceded by a squad of twenty men with axes who were to clear away obstructions. Every individual in the force had a piece of white paper attached to his hat to distinguish him from the enemy in the darkness. One column, with General Wayne at its head, turned to the right and crossed the marsh, still flooded with some two feet of tide. They thus got

around the abattis that protected the western base of the slope and gained the beach on the south side of the Point. The other column crossed a half-ruined bridge to attack from the opposite direction. These movements were quickly discovered by the enemy's pickets, and the garrison was aroused and fully ready for defense on all sides by the time the Americans began to climb the height. The redcoats filled every niche among the rocks on the slope and poured down a constant fire of musketry and bad language; but Wayne's rush was rapid and irresistible. The assailants came up the slope so swiftly that they suffered little loss, and shoulder to shoulder pressed over the works, heedless of obstacles. Wayne stood by directing the movement when a bullet struck him a glancing blow on the forehead. He fell to the ground stunned; but soon recovered sufficiently to raise himself on one knee and shout, "Forward, my brave fellows, forward!"

Then he called on two of his officers to carry him into the works where he desired to die, in case his wound proved fatal. The fight was over within twenty minutes from the time it began and the garrison surrendered. The

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British lost sixty-two killed, and the Americans fifteen.

As soon as daylight came the guns of the captured fortress were turned against the ships in the offing, which cut their cables and slipped out of range. About sixty of the garrison made their escape in boats to the other side of the river. Five American deserters were found in the fort; three of whom were hanged with little ceremony.

Money rewards and medals were given to Wayne and the leaders in the assault. The ordnance and stores captured were appraised at nearly two hundred thousand dollars. Congress paid for them and the money was distributed among the troops engaged.

The news of the victory caused universal rejoicing and revival of courage, and the British raiders in Connecticut were hastily withdrawn. A large force of the enemy was dispatched from New York to recover the fort, and the Americans abandoned it after holding it only three days. Meanwhile the works had been destroyed and the garrison with the cannon and stores removed into the Highlands.

In October the British in their turn abandoned not only Stony Point but Verplank's Point and the "rebels" reopened King's Ferry.



The view down the river from Stony Point

Haverstraw and Stony Point 133

Stony Point is today the same rough promontory it was then. The sides are wooded, but the crest of the ridge has much open grassy land where one can trace remnants of the old earthworks, and where, from favored spots one gets beautiful views up and down the river. It will always be hallowed ground to every true American, and very properly has been made a public park to preserve it for all time.

X

THE HIGHLANDS

FOR twenty miles, between Peekskill and Cornwall, the Hudson plays hide and seek with the ancient rock-ribbed hills and mountains. The river scenery here is at its finest and often attains to real sublimity, especially if observed by moonlight or on mysterious days of haze, or when a storm sweeps over the rugged heights. None of the mountains are particularly lofty, for the highest is not much more than fifteen hundred feet, but they lift so steeply and massively from the river borders that they are far more imposing than many a mountain that soars to a much greater altitude in a different situation. A railroad skirts the water's edge on either side of the stream, now and then darting through a tunnel or dodging behind a rocky wall, but on the whole affording a delightful impression of the scenery. All the large timber was long ago taken from the mountains, and the newer trees are cut as soon as they become of useful size; but as no fires have swept through

the woodland for many years it appears from a distance like the original forest.

Peekskill, at the southern gateway to the Highlands, is a pretty town half hidden in a ravine, half scrambling up the sides of steep green slopes where several brooks come down into a quiet bay. There is an interesting story that the first settler of the town was a Dutch navigator, Captain Jans Peek, who got stuck in the mud here, soon after the voyage of Henry Hudson, and spent the remainder of his life in contentment by the faithless stream which he had mistaken for the main river. The creek came to be called Peek's Kill in consequence. Troops were quartered in the town from time to time during the Revolution, and at one period General Israel Putnam was in command. Here he caught the spy, Palmer, and wrote that famous note to a British officer, who interposed in the spy's behalf:—

“Edmund Palmer, an officer in the enemy's service, was taken as a spy, lurking within our lines. He has been tried as a spy, condemned as a spy, and shall be executed as a spy.”

Two hours later he added to the note, “P. S. He is hanged.”

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Less than three miles away are Gallows Hill with its folk lore and Revolutionary legends, and the Wayside Inn, where André tarried after his arrest. In the east room of the old hostelry are yet shown the marks his military boots made as he restlessly paced up and down its narrow limits. Among the famous men who have had summer homes at Peekskill should be mentioned the great pulpit orator, Henry Ward Beecher.

Over on the west shore of the bay rises the Dunderberg, or Thunder Mount, and less than three miles to the north the river runs between two other wild, brushy heights—Bear Hill and Anthony's Nose. The next conspicuous mountain is Sugar Loaf; and beyond West Point is the grandest group of all including Crow Nest and Storm King, Mount Taurus and Breakneck.

It used to be currently believed by the settlers along the river that the Highlands were under the dominion of supernatural and mischievous beings, who had taken some pique against the Dutch colonists in the early time of the settlement. In consequence of this it was their particular delight to vent their spleen, and indulge their humors on the Dutch skippers; bothering them with flaws, head winds, counter

currents, and all kinds of impediments, inso-much that a Dutch navigator was always obliged to be exceedingly wary and deliberate in his proceedings.

The captains of the river craft were especially fearful of a little goblin who haunted the neighborhood of the Dunderberg, wearing trunk hose and a sugar-loaf hat, and carrying a speaking trumpet in his hand. They declared that they had heard him in stormy weather, in the midst of the turmoil, giving orders for the piping up of a fresh gust of wind, or the rattling off of another thunder-clap; that sometimes he had been seen surrounded by a crew of little imps in broad breeches and short doublets, tumbling head over heels in the rack and mist, and playing a thousand gambols in the air, or buzzing like a swarm of flies about Anthony's Nose; and that at such times, the hurry-scurry of the storm was always greatest. One time a sloop, in passing by the Dunderberg, was overtaken by a thunder-gust that came scouring round the mountain, and seemed to burst just over the vessel. Though tight and well ballasted, she labored dreadfully and the water came over the gunwale. All the crew were amazed when it was discovered that there was a little white

came a small cannon. One might naturally infer that this cannon had belonged to some British war vessel; but instead it was gravely proclaimed to be a relic of Captain Kidd. Then a speculator worked up enough enthusiastic interest to collect twenty-two thousand dollars, for the purpose of securing the vast riches that everyone knew must lie there on the river bottom where the cannon had been found. Vague rumors were in circulation about a sunken ship, the deck of which had been bored through with a long auger, and when the auger was withdrawn it brought up pieces of silver in its thread. A coffer-dam was built, and a powerful pump established over the supposed resting place of the pirate ship and the work went merrily on until the funds ran low. Then faith began to waver and the enterprise collapsed.

Between the Dunderberg and Bear Mount winds an ancient road, on which the British and the Continental soldiers marched back and forth in the Revolutionary War. Reminiscent of that time, is the village of Doodletown back in the hills. The place got its name in jocular reference to the "Yankee Doodle boys," as the patriot soldiers were sometimes called.



The Dunderberg



Then, too, there is Bloody Pond, or Highland Lake, on the shores of which tradition declares that several Hessians were killed and their bodies thrown into its gloomy waters. Old residents of the vicinity say that even now, on overcast and windy nights in midsummer, ghostly apparitions in helmets and stout riding boots may be seen flitting across the dark bosom of the pond, and that there floats to the frightened ear the whispering of commands in a strange tongue and the faint rattle of sabres and harness.

Anthony's Nose is a long ridge sloping down to the river from the east, and pierced at the tip by a railway tunnel. The explanation of its extraordinary name is that in colonial days a vessel was one day passing up the river under the command of Captain Anthony Hogan. As it approached this mountain the mate was impressed that the profile of the mountain and the shape of the captain's nose, which was notable for its vigorous prominence, bore a rather striking resemblance to each other. As he glanced back and forth comparing them the captain caught the drift of his thoughts and said, "What! does that mountain look like my nose? Call it then, if you please, Anthony's Nose."

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As we go on up the river we at length come to the bold plateau of West Point, with its shaggy cliffs reaching out into the stream, and overlooked from the rear by wooded heights. It was Washington who first suggested this place as a desirable situation for a United States Military Academy. The Academy may be said to have begun its existence in 1802; yet until 1811 it lived "at a poor dying rate" and in the latter year had not a single cadet.

But with the beginning of the second war with England the legislators awoke to the necessity of making the institution an effective aid in furnishing trained leaders for the future needs of the army. Admirable work was done in the years that followed, and the graduates at length tested the value of their instruction under the skies of Mexico, where in two campaigns "we conquered a great country and won peace without the loss of a single battle or skirmish."

The corps of cadets numbers between three and four hundred. They room together in twos. The furniture of each apartment is confined to the bare necessities, and each cadet is required to make his own bed and keep his quarters tidy. He is aroused at six o'clock in

the morning by the drums. Twenty minutes later his room must be in order, bedding folded and wash bowl inverted. Woe betide him if he is dilatory. A superior visits him and reports his delinquency, or, as the lad would say, "skins" him. Breakfast is eaten between half-past six and seven. From eight o'clock until noon he is busy with recitations, class parades and other duties. Then he has two hours for dinner and recreation. Academic work is over at four o'clock, and the rest of the day is occupied by drills, amusements and dress parade. Lights are extinguished in quarters at ten, and the cadet is supposed to go to sleep.

It is doubtful if he always does so. Stories of stealthy midnight expeditions for the purpose of hazing some unfortunate youngster, or to enjoy the mysterious edible mixed in a wash-basin and known as "cadet hash," form a part of the traditions of the Point. But these offenses against discipline are less frequent than formerly. A better sentiment has grown up as to hazing, and even the wildest spirits thoroughly appreciate their privileges and responsibilities. The restriction of the cadet to "limits," which by no means include the whole of the reservation, and his total lack of money are powerful ob-

stacles to forbidden pleasures. He is paid forty-five dollars a month; but every penny of it is spent for him by the quartermaster and commissary officers, and he is permitted to receive no cash whatever from home or anywhere else. He does not even have pockets in his trousers. The cadets all stand on their own merits, and parental position or wealth count for nothing. As a matter of fact the fathers of the majority of the cadets are wage-earners.

There are nearly two hundred buildings of all sorts. Some of the newer ones are strikingly big and beautiful. Conspicuous on the north side of the plain, where there is a noble view up the river, stands the tall graceful shaft of the Battle Monument, which was erected in memory of the two thousand two hundred and thirty members of the regular army who perished in the defense of the Union during the Civil War. Near by is Trophy Point crowded with cannon and mortars captured in Mexico and some guns taken from the British in the Revolution. Under the crest of the hill here is a modern battery with its guns pointing up the river. But I will not attempt to list further West Point's many features and attractions.



The Battle Monument at West Point

The rocky character of the Point did not in the early days invite settlers and it was only frequented by the hunter and the wood-cutter. During the war for independence, Constitution Island, to the northeast, was fortified and an enormous chain, each link weighing over one hundred pounds, was stretched across the river. The Point itself also had its defences, and a redoubt of logs, stones and earth was started on the most commanding eminence to the west of the plateau. When Sir Henry Clinton came up the river to coöperate with Burgoyne the defences were very imperfect, and he captured them with little trouble. After Burgoyne was worsted Sir Henry withdrew down the river, and the Americans resumed work on the fortifications. Arnold's treachery threatened to undo all their labor, but his plans came to grief, and West Point was never in serious danger afterward.

Constitution Island is a mass of rocks inclosing considerable arable land, and only separated from the eastern shore of the river by low meadows and marshes. For many years it was the home of Miss Susan Warner who wrote "The Wide, Wide World" published in 1849. The story was long and slow, according to the

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critics, but the public bought it with avidity nevertheless, and no book of that period, except "Uncle Tom's Cabin," exceeded it in popularity. Other novels by the same author followed. Her sister Anna likewise won favor as a writer, and the two combined in the production of "The Hills of the Shatemuc," the final word of the title being one of the Indian names for the Hudson.

Looking northward from the island the great rounded crags of Crow Nest and Storm King are seen overshadowing the river. The name of the former indicates the prevalence of crows on that eminence, just as Eagle Valley between the two mountains signifies that the vicinity is a noted breeding place of eagles—birds once very abundant along the Hudson, and still often seen. The river front of Crow Nest is called "Kidd's Plug Cliff" on the supposition that a mass of projecting rock on the face of the precipice forms a plug to an orifice where the pirate hid a store of gold.

Storm King, the monarch of the Highland mountains and guardian of the northern gateway, was originally called "The Klinkenberg" which means "Echo Mount;" and later it became known as "Butter Hill" from a fancied



Storm King under a cloud cap

resemblance of its dome-like form to a pat of butter. N. P. Willis, who lived in the vicinity, and whom some of his neighbors used to speak of unappreciatively as "the dude poet of the Hudson," succeeded in bestowing the title of "Storm King" on it, as a term befitting its dignity, and expressive of the fact that it is an unfailing weather gauge to all the country north of it.

The rough headland opposite, whose precipices are too steep to support much vegetation, is Breakneck Mountain, and close at hand to the south of Breakneck is Mount Taurus. There is a story that a wild bull once terrorized the country back of the latter height, until at last a strong party undertook to hunt down and kill the creature. He fled before his pursuers to the top of the next mountain where his impetuous flight carried him over the verge of the crags. Down he crashed onto the rocks below, and there he was found with a broken neck.

Well out in the stream opposite the place where this tragedy occurred is Pollopel's Island. The old skippers when they came to this island on their way down the river are said to have had a habit of christening new hands by sousing

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them into the current. The ceremony gratified the navigators' love for horse play, and at the same time was supposed to make the victim immune from the goblins that were well known to haunt the numerous wild mountains that were to be encountered in the next few miles.

With the help of Pollopel's Island, this northern gateway of the Highlands was obstructed in 1779 by a line of strong iron-pointed pikes, each about thirty feet in length, secured at the bottom in cribs filled with stone, and slanted so that their points were just at the surface of the water. The British sailors, however, under the guidance of a deserter, found little difficulty in taking their ships past this obstruction after the Highland forts had been captured. Later the cribs were gradually destroyed by ice, or removed.

A romantic story which brings the island into the scene of its action is the following: Many years ago a fair maid of the neighborhood was beloved by a farmer's lad. At the same time her attractions won the heart of a young minister, and one winter evening the preacher took her for a sleighride. They were driving on the river near Pollopel's Island, when the ice broke and they were plunged into the cold water.

But the farmer's lad happened to be not far away and he came in all haste and rescued them. The lady at once embraced her rustic lover with a warmth that was unmistakable. It was clear to the minister that this affection made his own suit hopeless, and he promptly renounced his love, and there in the moonlight united the fair lass and the farmer's lad in marriage.

XI

FROM CORNWALL TO KINGSTON

THE northern slope of Storm King declines into a table-land that is broken by numerous ravines, and here the town of Cornwall pursues the quiet and orderly tenor of its life. With its majestic mountain background and its fine outlook on the river and a rich soil that makes possible flourishing gardens and an abundance of blossoms and fruit, it is exceptionally attractive. The town is a favorite resort in summer, and its population at that season is much more than double what it is the rest of the year. Country lanes and bypaths invite those who enjoy rambling afoot to explore the shaggy steeps of Storm King, and many varied and interesting drives are possible. Especially noteworthy is the drive to Orange Lake through one of the most fertile valleys in the state and amid a constant succession of stock farms with their luscious pastures and productive fields.



The Fishkill

In the snug but rather dilapidated village that huddles around the Cornwall railway station and steamboat landing I had a chat with an old resident whose opinions on affairs both local and general, as he unfolded them to me, were decidedly individual and interesting. He was inclined to be critical of the wealthy city people who have acquired so many fine estates along the river, and to be doubtful of the value of most of the modern improvements which their presence has inspired. Thus he mentioned that in Cornwall they "used to get as fine water from the springs and wells as you'd find anywhere, and yet by and by nothing would do but we must have water works. I suppose we're obliged to expand somehow—that's to be expected—the pants a boy wore when he was two years old won't do for him when he's man grown. But when they claim the water is better than what we used to have, they're going a little too far. No person on earth can fool me into believing that water which has fallen from the sky and been gathered in a pond and then stood a long time in pipes can be as good as spring water that has filtered through the ground.

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“Well, everything nowadays is more or less a fake, my friend. You see the costly homes that line the banks of the Hudson—‘the Millionaires’ Belt,’ they call it—and you think how grand they are. But a good share of those homes are closed all winter and much of the rest of the time. The owners are in New York during the day and only use their houses here in the country for sleeping places. They are rarely here steady at any season of the year, but are off to Newport or Long Branch or the other pleasure resorts. Many families of ordinary means could support themselves on the acres that the millionaires reserve in idleness around their mansions. Neither do the fine places give any great amount of employment, and they’re taxed very lightly. You show me a man who dodges his taxes, and I can tell you pretty near what his religion is, even if he does have a great big Bible and draw a long face to say his prayers. These rich people are a class by themselves. If a fellow in overalls has been drinking and staggers past they scoff and say, ‘Oh, see that bum!’ but they think nothing of being put into a cab in the city and driven home at eleven o’clock at night because they can’t stand up to get there any other way.

They want prohibition and respect for the law on the part of the poor, while they themselves do as they please; and they do have their own way to quite an extent simply because they've got the boodle."

Not far above Cornwall the Hudson is joined by a mild little stream known as Murderer's Creek. Near the mouth of this stream in early times there dwelt a family which numbered among its friends an Indian called Naoman. This Indian was frequently welcomed to the family's cabin and showed great friendliness toward them, but in some way the head of the household incurred the hatred of Naoman's tribe who resolved to kill the whole family. The friendly Indian contrived to impart this news and the whites stole away at night and rowed down stream in a boat intending to escape through the Highlands. But when opposite Pollopel's Island a large canoe full of savages put out and gave chase. The white man succeeded in killing several of the pursuers with his rifle, but was overtaken and made captive. With his wife and children he was carried in triumph to the Indian village. The chief demanded from them the name of the person who had warned them, but they would

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not answer, even when they were told that their refusal would be punished with instant death. Then Naoman stepped forward and acknowledged that he was the guilty one. At once he was struck down and a rush was made on the defenceless white family. They were all killed and their bodies were thrown into the creek, the name of which recalls their melancholy fate.

The next places of importance which are encountered in journeying up the river are the towns of Fishkill and Newburgh, just across the river from each other. Behind the former, extending northeastward, is the finely sculptured range of elevations known as the Beacon Hills. During the Revolution some of these peaks were prominent stations for signal fires which were to give warning of any approach of the enemy. The beacon pyres were in the form of a pyramid, rising to a height of thirty feet, and made of logs filled in with brush and inflammable materials. A beacon on Storm King gave the first signal and the rest were subordinate.

Newburgh covers the slope of a wide hillside on which the buildings rise in a series of terraces from the water's edge. The place occupies almost the only spot on the western side of the



The Poughkeepsie Bridge

stream between Jersey City and Kingston where a great town could be situated, accessible by good wagon roads from the interior. It has therefore excelled from the first as a trading town. After the capture of the forts near New York early in the war, British vessels were free to patrol the river south of the Highlands, and at Newburgh was the most available ferry thereafter for the Patriot troops that hurried now east, now west, compensating for the pitiful inadequacy of every division of Washington's army by their quick shifting to points of danger.

On an eminence in plain view from the river is the Jonathan Hasbrouck house which, after the battle of Yorktown was fought, was Washington's headquarters from April, 1782, until August of the next year. The house is in an excellent state of preservation and is used as a repository for military relics. Its stone walls are two feet thick, and it has hewn rafters of savory cedar. There is an old story that while Washington lived in it a plot was concocted to capture him and turn him over to Sir Henry Clinton. A man named Ettrick and his daughter dwelt in a secluded valley to the south of the Hasbrouck house. Their home was at the

head of a long, narrow bay, and though only a short distance away in a direct line could only be reached by the road after making a detour of nearly two miles. The chief was in the habit of going occasionally down to the head of this bay, and Ettrick and several confederates planned to seize him on one of these visits and row off with him down the river. Luckily Ettrick's daughter betrayed the plot and it came to naught.

While at Newburgh a paper drawn up and signed by officers who had stood by him through the darkest of the conflict, informed him that they wished this country to be a monarchy and Washington himself its king. The appeal seems to have grieved him deeply. He had not been fighting for personal aggrandizement, and such an outcome of the war would be melancholy indeed. In his response he said, "You could not have found a person to whom your schemes are more disagreeable," and begged them to banish such thoughts from their minds.

At length the day came for ordering the disbanding of the army. It was an occasion of jubilee that was marked by a noble address from the commander-in-chief, and ended in an illumination on a gigantic scale. Watchfires

on all the prominent hills blazed from huge stacks of timber to announce that peace was at last a reality.

A half dozen miles above Newburgh is a projection from the western shore that from early Colonial times has borne the significant name of *den Duyvels' Dans Kamer*—the Devils' Dance Chamber. It is a flat-topped rock, half an acre in extent. The devils referred to are Indians who were accustomed to meet on the rock for councils and merry-makings. When the superstitious Dutchmen saw them engaged in their pow-wows and dancing about the camp-fires under the lead of their medicine men they no doubt seemed fiends incarnate. So presently it came to be a matter of common belief that the devil appeared here to his votaries to set them on when any particularly atrocious deed was to be accomplished.

The tendency seems to have been irresistible to associate Captain Kidd with every unusually striking rock or cove along the borders of the river; and it is understood that one of the hoards of pirate treasure was secreted in the waters neighboring the *Danskammer*. Attempts to locate this wealth have, however, thus far failed.

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We now begin to come into that part of the river where ice-houses abound. There is a constant succession of these immense store-houses hugging the shores all the way to the head of navigation, forming a feature of the scenery more conspicuous than ornamental. Into them is gathered the winter harvest of the river's surface, which is later sent in barges to New York and other cities as it is needed. Housing the ice gives work to thousands of laboring men along the course of the river, and they look forward with eagerness to this chance of employment during the rigors of midwinter. "Ice or no ice," says John Burroughs, "sometimes means bread or no bread to scores of families, and it means added or diminished comfort to many more. It is a crop that takes two or three weeks of rugged weather to grow. Men go out from time to time and examine it, as the farmer goes out and examines his grain or grass, to see when it will do to cut. If there comes a deep fall of snow, the ice is 'pricked' so as to let the water up through, and form snow ice. A band of fifteen or twenty men, about a yard apart, each armed with a chisel bar, and marching in line, puncture the ice at each step with a single sharp thrust. But ice, to be first



John Burroughs at "Riverby"


quality, must grow from beneath, not from above. A good yield every two or three years is about all that can be counted on.

“The cutting and gathering of the ice enlivens these white, desolate fields amazingly. There is the broad straight canal running nearly across the river. On either side lie the ice meadows, each marked out by cedar or hemlock boughs. The further one is cut first, and when cleared shows a large black parallelogram in the midst of the plain of snow. Then the next one is cut, leaving a strip of ice between the two for the horses to move and turn on. Sometimes nearly two hundred men and boys are at work at once, marking, ploughing, scraping, sawing, hauling, chiseling; some floating down the pond on great square islands towed by a horse or their fellow workmen, others on the bridges, separating the blocks with thin chisel bars, others feeding the elevators, while knots and straggling lines of idlers here and there look on in cold discontent, unable to get a job.

“The best crop of ice is an early crop. Late in the season the ice is apt to get sunstruck, when it becomes ‘shaky,’ like a piece of poor timber.

“One of the prettiest sights about the ice harvesting is the elevator in operation. There is an unending procession of the great crystal blocks ascending this incline. They go up in couples, glowing and changing in the sun, and recalling the precious stones that adorn the walls of the celestial city. When they reach the platform where they leave the elevator they seem to slip off like things of life. They are still in pairs and separate only as they enter on their ‘runs.’ Here they are subjected to a rapid inspection, and every square with a trace of sediment or earth-stain is rejected and sent hurling down into the abyss. Those that pass the examination glide into the building along the gentle incline and are switched off here and there on branch runs, and distributed to all parts of the immense interior.”

On the portion of the river above the Highlands where it congeals so firmly, ice is not only important as a commodity, but it is also a source of pleasure. The breadth of the stream and its long straight reaches, and the evenness with which it freezes, owing to its lack of rapids and vagrant currents, make it unusually favorable for ice-yachting. With what astonishing speed those sails on skates do move! Sometimes they



go more than a mile a minute and outstrip the fastest express trains. A ride on one of them is like the Chinaman's first toboggan slide—"Phwt!!! Walkee back two mile." The runners are three in number and support a broad, low platform, on which the pleasure-seekers, wrapped in furs or blankets, lie at full length. There is, of course, quite a degree of danger, but this only seems to add spice to the enjoyment.

As we continue northward we see the great cantilever bridge spanning the river at Poughkeepsie. It is about two and a half miles long, extending from highland to highland, and at the center is one hundred and sixty-five feet clear above the river. The bridge was finished in 1889 and cost over three million dollars. One or two athletes, seeking money and notoriety have allowed themselves to drop from it into the river and have survived the foolhardy exploit.

The name of the adjacent city is said to be derived from a Mohican word *apo-keep-sinck*,—"a safe and pleasant harbor." This harbor is a small bay where a stream that flows through the town joins the Hudson. It received its title in the following manner:

A youthful Pequod warrior who had been captured by some Delawares and condemned to torture, was offered his liberty if he would renounce his own tribe and become a member of theirs. He refused to accept such terms and was bound to a tree for sacrifice when a shriek from a thicket startled his captors. A young girl leaped into their midst and implored for the life of the young brave who was her lover. The Delawares held a consultation but were interrupted by the warwhoops of a party of Hurons. They snatched up their arms to defend themselves from the fierce enemy, and the maiden took advantage of the confusion to sever the thongs that bound the captive. But in the conflict that ensued the two were separated, and a Huron chief carried her off as a trophy. The Pequod attempted her rescue by entering the camp of the Hurons disguised as a wizard. She was sick and her captor employed the wizard to exert his art to cure her. That night the two eluded the vigilance of the Hurons, and with swift feet fled toward the Hudson. They were pursued, but reached the river first and darted out on the stream in a light canoe. The strong arms of the young warrior paddled his loved one safely to a deep rocky nook at



The Vassar Gate

the mouth of a creek, and there he concealed her. Some members of his own tribe were within hail, and they promptly came in response to his shouts and helped him drive off the Hurons who had followed him. The sheltered nook where the maiden was hid had been indeed a safe harbor, and fully merited its title of Apo-keep-sinck.

On the southern suburbs of Poughkeepsie, between the river and the highway, in a fine open spot, stands the house that was once the home of Professor S. F. B. Morse, who made telegraphy practicable. A little above, we pass the great Call Rock where tradition says the early burghers of the town used to sit and hail the sloops for news as they drifted by. Here at the waterside are the vacant and battered brick buildings of Matthew Vassar's brewery whence came the money that started Vassar College. Originally, Mr. Vassar, when he thought of doing something of public value with his wealth, was inclined to erect a monument to the discoverer of the river. But the announcement of this plan seemed to arouse little interest, and he at length decided to found a college instead. So the first institution in the world devoted exclusively to the higher

education of women came into being in 1861. It is on the upland two miles east of the city in the midst of an extensive and beautiful park. Its more recent buildings have a good deal of architectural charm, and there is an air of repose and refinement about the place that is very attractive. Close at hand is a little lake winding back between wooded banks in a protected hollow, and one of the prettiest sights at the college is to see the canoes on its quiet waters, moving swift or slow according to the mood of their occupants. Some of the girls prefer horse-back riding; and as one of the helpers about the place remarked to me, "They are up at half-past six every morning to canter away somewhere over the roads. But there's others who don't get up till they have to."

Not far above Poughkeepsie the eastern ridges of the Catskills begin to come into view from the river, and are one of the chief scenic attractions of this part of the Hudson valley for thirty or forty miles. In hazy weather they have very much the appearance of clouds along the horizon, and as a matter of fact they were called by the aborigines the *Onteoras* or *Mountains of the Sky*. Among these mountains, according to Indian belief, was kept a treasury



The lake at Vassar

of storm and sunshine presided over by an old squaw spirit who dwelt on the highest peak. The great Manitou employed her to manufacture clouds. Sometimes she wove them out of cobwebs, gossamers and morning dew, and let them float off in the air to give light summer showers. Sometimes she would brew up black thunderstorms and send down drenching rains. She kept day and night shut up in her wigwam, letting out one at a time. Among her other duties was that of making a new moon every month. The old moons she cut up into stars.

One of the minor villages bordering the river within a short distance of Poughkeepsie is West Park, where John Burroughs, nature lover, philosopher, and grower of small fruits has chosen to make his home. No one else has ever written of the wild life of the fields and forests, particularly of the birds, with such enthusiasm and keenness of observation and with such lively humor. On the long slope rising from the river are his acres of grapes and currants, and well up the incline stands his home of gray native stone nearly hidden by shade and fruit trees. He has the Hudson in sight from the house, and also from his little bark-covered study lower on the hill where much of his writing

has been done. Latterly, however, his favorite writing place is at "Slabsides" a rude but not uncomfortable domicile he has built for himself back a mile or two in the rocky woodland.

The first large town north of Poughkeepsie is Kingston, one of the earliest settled places on the river. Its founders built their cabins near the mouth of a creek where they fortified themselves, and this portion of the present city still has the name of Rondout, meaning fort or earthwork. As time went on scattered farmers established themselves, and then trouble developed with the Indians. A farmer was killed and two houses burned in May, 1658, whereupon the governor of the province, Peter Stuyvesant, came up the river from Manhattan with fifty soldiers and called the sachems to account. They conferred under an ancient tree of vast expanse, and the dusky-skinned chieftains were scolded roundly by the doughty Peter, who demanded that they should deliver up the murderer. They replied that the culprit was not one of their tribe, and moreover he had fled into the great woods, no one could say where or how far. There followed much argument and excuses and threats, and at last the Indians came forward to propitiate the governor with



The old Kingston Senate House

belts of wampum and begged for peace. He did not have much confidence in them, however, and in fear there might be a renewal of hostilities he ordered the settlers to build, on an out-thrust of the upland a little back from the river, a stout stockade large enough to contain all their buildings, and into which they were to retire each night.

Stuyvesant's precautions were amply justified, for that autumn a party of Indians employed by one of the settlers got hold of a jug of firewater and made the night so hideous with their tipsy yells that a panic was started among the settlers. In spite of strict orders from the commander of the stockade, certain ones fired at the Indians, wounding several, and as a result a desultory and barbaric war began. The redskins soon gathered a force of five hundred braves, and surrounded the fort. No one durst leave it for three weeks. Crops were burned, cattle slaughtered, houses destroyed, and a number of captives were put to death by torture.

A truce was at last secured, and a feeling of security gradually developed which led the Kingston people to leave the gates of their fort open day and night. But in June, 1663, the Indians, who had come to the fort in great

numbers under pretence of trading, made a sudden attack while most of the white men were outside of the walls. The Dutch rallied, and after a desperate fight in which eighteen of them were killed, drove out the invaders. Forty-two prisoners were carried away by the savages, and nearly all the newly-established farms were destroyed. The war did not end until the local Indians had been almost exterminated. The survivors agreed to abandon the river settlements to the Dutch, retaining the privilege of trading at Rondout, "provided but three canoes came at a time, preceded by a flag of truce."

During the Revolution Kingston again suffered. When Sir Henry Clinton moved north to coöperate with Burgoyne this was almost the farthest point he succeeded in reaching. He easily captured and destroyed the shipping in the harbor, and drove the garrison from the neighboring earthworks. Then a British detachment marched up the slope from Rondout to Kingston, encountering no more resistance than a stray shot now and then from some exasperated American. They found the village deserted by almost everyone except a few slaves. The people of the town—"a pestiferous nest of

rebels," the British esteemed them—had fled, taking with them only such valuables as they could hastily stow in wagons, and the soldiers immediately scattered about the place looting and setting fire to the houses and barns. This done they hastily withdrew. One of the houses burned was a stone dwelling in which were held the first sessions of the state senate, but the walls remained intact, and the interior was presently restored. It stands today one of the most interesting relics of the past in the Hudson Valley.

XII

ON THE BORDERS OF THE CATSKILLS

FROM Kingston a railroad runs back into the southern Catskills, a region of noble wooded heights with trout streams in every glen; and when you get beyond its wilder portion the mountains descend into vast billowy hills with much open pasture land, and with farm fields clinging to the lofty slopes. The name Catskill is of Dutch origin and means Wildcat Creek. The creek which won this particular title by the old-time prevalence of catamounts in its valley joins the Hudson about a score of miles above Kingston, and near its mouth is a town bearing the same name. Here is another entrance to the famous group of mountains and hills, and a railroad winds back into the tangled valleys. But a more agreeable method of journeying thither is by driving. It was thus I chose to go one day about the first of June, and as the horse jogged along I had plenty of opportunity to look about and

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Kaaterskill Clove

YES!

On the Borders of the Catskills 171

see the country. The road rambled in and out of the hollows and over the hills, and was full of pleasant and unexpected changes. It followed the line of least resistance. Straight lines and angles are only suited to city thoroughfares, and a region where a direct highway is almost impossible gives genuine satisfaction. Each time I mounted a ridge I had a glorious view of the blue mountains ever looming higher into the sky as I drew nearer; and there was many a delectable spot in the vales—meadows golden with dandelions that imparted a glow of color delightful to behold, an abundance of trees tenderly green with new leafage, and swift streams sparkling in the sunshine. The birds were singing, and occasionally I heard the tapping of a woodpecker, or saw a hawk soaring far aloft.

Now and then I passed a farmhouse. The dwellings remote from the villages were apt to look neglected and often were vacant. Evidently farming was not so attractive a calling as in years past. But the rustic homes that had been transformed into summer hotels and boarding places looked prosperous enough to make up. The opening of the vacation season was near at hand and the women were busy

about the woodwork and windows with their scrubbing cloths and brushes, and the men were making needed repairs or improvements and touching up the dwellings and fences with gay paint. The painters were bound to have something striking to satisfy their own sense of the beautiful and please the city people. I suppose a quiet simplicity as compared with giddy streaks and patches seems hopelessly tame to rustic dwellers and perhaps is uninteresting to many townspeople as well—more's the pity.

During my drive I went up the famous Kaaterskill Clove—a charming wilderness valley that opens back between two mountains. A steep, narrow road, abounding with thank-you-m'ams, crept up one side of the bordering ridges, and a noisy stream worried down the rocky depths of the hollow with many a rapid and foaming leap. But what I especially wanted to see was the portion of the mountains most closely associated with Rip Van Winkle. I doubt if Irving had any definite spot in mind when he wrote the story, yet the public long ago decided that Van Winkle's house and the place where he slept were high on the Hudson slope of South Mountain. An old road zigzags up to a summit house, but is reputed to be so pre-





The Rip Van Winkle hut and the Half-way House

cipitous and rough that I left my horse in the valley and climbed on foot. By and by I came to a little hut by the roadside snugged into a wild hollow with wooded cliffs rising around on three sides, and a deep gorge dropping away on the fourth side. This hut is known as the Rip Van Winkle house. It is said to have been there for at least fifty years, and no one knows its origin. Close to it is a ruinous hotel, and both are much marked and scribbled with names of idling sightseers. A rude path leads up the declivity to the left, and a short scramble brings one to a great boulder inscribed "Rip's Rock"—the supposed place where he had his long sleep.

When I returned to Catskill I lodged with a family that had originally lived in the mountains and they gave me a good deal of entertaining information not only about the Catskills but about other matters of local interest. "Yes," said the man, "that little house was where Rip lived, and the rock was where he slept. Him and his dog Snider went up to that rock, and he tied the dog to a sapling and lay down for a nap. When he woke up he looked for his dog Snider, and he couldn't see anything of him, and he called to him but got no answer. After a while he happened to cast his eyes up in a

tree and saw his dog's bones hanging there. The sapling had grown to be a big tree in twenty years and as it increased in height had carried the dog up into the air.

"There's a wonderful lot of people come to the mountains now compared with what came when I was a boy. Why, gracious goodness! in the district where I was raised there was only scattered farms, and a schoolhouse no bigger than my kitchen, but now the place is quite a town with stores, hotels, churches and everything else. The people in that region have about given up farming. We used to have some awful crops where at present they only grow a little garden stuff. My father cut good timothy hay on land that today is grown up to woods as big as my arm; but he and the other farmers could hardly make a fair living. They just managed to keep the interest on their mortgages paid up, and that was about all. Every Saturday we'd drive to Catskill with butter and eggs, poultry, pork and other produce. We had some regular customers, but mostly we'd sell to the stores and trade out what was due us. A good deal of work was done with oxen. My father had a yoke. Once they ran away when they was hitched to a dumpcart. Father and I were



The oldest house in Hudson

in the cart, and to stop 'em he guided 'em into a swamp hole. That did the trick, but they got mired so deep we had to have help to haul 'em out.

"My mother died, and then my father swapped his farm for a place down here and went into the milk business. He had to have some one to keep house, so he married again, and as his second wife had a little cash they made a good start and did very well, though they bought everything that went into the cows' mouths.

"With prices what they are now any man back in the hills who wants to take care of his farm can make money hand over fist. But most of 'em think farming is too hard work and prefer to get their profit from city boarders. Gee! Some of 'em charge to beat the band. They're robbers! But then lots of these city people have money to burn. I took a city man with his wife and two children in my team to one of the hotels last summer; and, by golly, boy, he'd brought along two trunks full of playthings for those kids, and he hired a big room at fifteen dollars a week to turn the kids and their playthings loose in.

"I've been surprised to notice how little some city people knowed about the country. They're

supposed to be up to snuff on everything in New York, but land alive! they do ask you the dumbdest questions that ever was imagined. One day a fellow in a party I was taking for a drive pointed and said, 'There's a flock of cows over there. Now will you tell me which of 'em give the buttermilk?'

"He was kind of a fresh duck but I led him on till I made sure he was sincere and innocent, and then I said, 'You see that cow with the white face—well, that's the one that gives the buttermilk.'

"'But how do you get it out of her?' he says.

"'Well,' says I, 'we set a pail under her bag and take hold of her tail and pump.'

"He believed me all right."

We had shad for breakfast, which the lady of the house said they did not indulge in nowadays very often. "They're getting to be a luxury," she said, "and so are most other river fish. I can remember when the farmers used to come and get herring by the cartload to use for fertilizer. Carp are about the only fish that are reasonable in price, and I don't care for them. They taste too muddy. The first one we had was bought for us by a neighbor. He couldn't get shad and said it was claimed this

was just as nice. If he'd been here when I'd got it cooked I could have throwed it at him, I was so mad. Over the river they have a carp net three thousand feet long and they pull in tons of those carp. The more they catch the more there seems to be. A sheeny from New York comes around and buys the fish at from six to nine cents a pound. The fishing is very profitable for the man that owns the net, and yet to look at his buildings you wouldn't think he was worth a dollar. Why, his barn is so full of holes you can throw a cat through anywhere."


Catskill's early history was comparatively tranquil. No serious conflicts occurred with the Indians, but there is a tradition that near by on Wanton Island a fierce battle was fought between the Mohawks and the Mohicans. The former at last retired to another island where they built fires and pretended to encamp. But after arranging sticks and stones near the fires and spreading blankets over them to give a semblance of seated men they retired to the forest and waited in ambush till the Mohicans appeared to complete their victory. At length, in the dead of night, the Mohicans came and, tomahawks in hand, made a sudden rush and assailed the blankets with great fury. This at

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once exposed them to the glow of the fires, and in the confusion of their mistaken attack they fell a ready prey to the arrows of the crafty Mohawks.

A little to the north of Catskill, across the river, is the city of Hudson. The place was settled in 1784 by thirty New Englanders, mostly Quakers. They were men mighty in the handling of the harpoon who had sailed on many seas, and though Hudson is over a hundred miles inland they proposed to establish here a town devoted to whaling and kindred industries. Strangely enough, they made a success on just these lines, and not only whalers but other vessels brought their spoils to the town from the ends of the earth. The growth of the place was phenomenal and the proprietors waxed wealthy. But when steam navigation became a certainty, Hudson as a seaport was doomed; yet not till 1845 was the last ship sold that had engaged in the whaling business.

The city is built on a bluff which rises abruptly from the river, and the brow of the bluff affords a very attractive view of the river. Clinging to the verge of this height is a weatherworn, big-chimneyed house, evidently one of the oldest in the place. I got acquainted with its occupant—a



negro, and ancient like his dwelling. He had always made his home in the vicinity, and so had his father before him. The latter had been somewhat noted as a violinist. "He made that his business," said my acquaintance, "and travelled around with a horse and wagon to play at balls and parties. There was quite a circuit he went over. He seemed to have a natural mother-wit gift for giving people a good time. It was born into him and he could make jokes so as to kill everyone laughing. His company was superior and it was appreciated. Once he went to Pennsylvania and they offered him a present of a house and lot worth six hundred dollars if he'd come there to live; but money was no object to him and he wouldn't go. Our family was all musical, and I've played the violin a good deal in my day; but its worldly you know, and I've given it up. I try to serve the Lord now."

In early life my informant was for some time a porter on a steamboat, and as a result of his experience had concluded there was "just as much difference between New Englanders and the people of the Middle States as between day and night." "On the boats where I worked," said he, "if a passenger didn't tip you for

carrying his bag you'd refuse to give it to him and tell him you'd lock it up. That would fetch the money from most of them, but not from a New Englander. He'd get mad and say, 'Where's the cap'n?' No, you couldn't work an Eastern man, but you could git the New York and New Jersey men on skin games every time."

While we talked a boy passed carrying some eels. "Those would suit me pretty well," remarked my friend. "I'll eat eel before I will any other fish. Down on the Mississippi they have an eel that's very much like our eels only somewhat darker, and it has little legs, or perhaps you might say each leg was a little hand with a claw into it. In the spring of the year those eels are blind and bite everything that touches 'em. I saw one in the water once close to a scow I was on, and I took an oar and squeezed him against the side of the boat. He squealed just like a rat and, by George! you ought to see him bite at the oar. If you get bitten by one, whatever you are going to do you want to do in five minutes. The only thing that'll save you is to ketch a live chicken and cut it open and clap it onto the bitten place.

," "Down in South America they have a gal-

On the Borders of the Catskills 181

vanic eel, and if he hits you you're paralyzed and can't move hand or foot. That's the reason the people don't go in swimming there. I had a cat once on shipboard that was a thieving sort of a creature, and I said, 'Mr. Cat, when we git near land where you can swim ashore, over you go.' Well, we got to Para, right under the equator in the middle of the globe, and I threw the cat overboard from near the bow. The tide was setting toward shore and I walked aft to see what became of the animal, but, my king! he wasn't to be seen. One of those galvanic eels must have struck him."

I asked the old negro about the various legends of the Hudson, hoping to get new versions, but he said, "These people along the river are superstitious and believe in lots of things, but I don't take any stock in such stories myself."

Down at the steamboat landing, while waiting to continue my journey, I had a chat with another local resident. Everything with him seemed to date from 1866, the year in which he married. "I paid five dollars a month rent then for two rooms," he said, "but a family ain't content now to live in that way, and the rent takes all a man earns. I seen the time here in

'66 when coal was fifteen dollars a ton; and the first barrel of flour we bought cost eighteen dollars. But it was a poor week I couldn't make thirty-five or forty dollars around the wharves, and this was a hundred per cent better town then than now."

I remarked on the frequency of the big ice-houses we could see across the river. "Yes," he responded, "they stand so thick all the way from Kingston to Albany that you can throw a stone from one to another the whole distance. Men drive here from nine miles back in the country in the winter to work icing, and they go home every night. They bring dinner pails bigger'n that post in front of us, and they get two dollars a day and freeze to death. They have to be up at three in the morning in order to arrive here ready to begin at seven, and they freeze coming and they freeze again going home. It's no job I'd care for."



Albany

XIII

AT THE HEAD OF NAVIGATION

ON THE west bank of the Hudson, one hundred and forty-five miles from New York, stands Albany. The population of both shores is dense for a dozen miles above, and Troy, Cohoes, and other cities form a close succession with little that is genuinely rural between. The buildings most in evidence along Albany's waterside are dingy old warehouses. These may be seriously lacking considered from a business standpoint, but they have the human look and interest that only age can confer. They have passed through trials and tribulations, and experience is written in their battered, time-worn walls and uncouth, out-of-date architecture. As you go back from the river the land soon begins to rise in a long vigorous slope, and at the top of the hill, where was the fort of the Colonial town from the earliest times, is now the great marble state capitol. The building presides not only over

the city, but the entire neighboring valley. Its size, its situation, and the dignity of its architecture unite to make it very impressive. But to fully realize its immensity one has to see it from the other side of the river. When its foundations were begun in 1869 it was expected to cost four million dollars. The building was ready for the legislature to meet in it ten years later, but many more years were required to complete it, and the total cost was twenty-one millions.

The first settlers of Albany chose this particular point on the river for their trading post because here started the great trail of the aborigines which crossed to the Mohawk River at Schenectady, and then followed the valley of that stream westward to the lake country. Other important trails or canoe routes to the southwestward and the north and east also began here. It was a central point on the Indian highways, just as it is now on the civilized transportation routes.

In 1614 a stockaded trading house was erected on the island just below the present city. Nine years later a few families from across the sea established themselves at the foot of the clay hill on which the capitol now lifts it

masses of sculptured granite, and built rude huts and a little log fort. At the end of the century the place consisted of about one hundred houses surrounded by a stockade pierced to the north and south by a narrow gateway. It was much resorted to by Indians and by the scarcely less savage French hunters, who ended each transaction by a grand spree. Its favorable position and the amicable relations maintained by the manorial lords with the Iroquois made it, until after the Revolution, one of the most important places in North America. One of its claims to distinction is the fact that it existed for over a century without a single lawyer.

Albany was included in the Van Rensselaer manor, and the patroon was a veritable feudal chieftain regarded with reverence by all the country. At one period there were on the domain several thousand tenants, and their gatherings were similar to those of the old Scottish clans. When a lord of the manor died, his tenants swarmed to the manor-house to do honor at the funeral. If it was announced that the patroon was coming to New York by land, crowds would turn out on the day he was expected, to see him drive through Broadway


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with his coach and four as though he were a prince royal. The great Van Rensselaer manor-house, built in 1765, was long considered the most palatial dwelling in the New World, and was noted for the princely character of its entertainment.

At the time of the Revolution Albany was still a stockaded town. During the war it was constantly a depot of supplies, and an outpost often threatened, but never reached by British expeditions from the lower river and from Canada and the Indian country. It was made the capital of the state in 1797, but its growth in population was not rapid until after the advent of the steamboat and the completion of the Erie Canal.

A most entertaining description of colonial Albany is found in Mrs. Grant's "Memoirs of an American Lady," from whose lively pages I quote freely in what follows. She writes of a time about a score of years preceding the Revolution.

"The city stretched along the banks of the Hudson. One very wide and long street lay parallel to the river, the intermediate space between it and the shore being occupied by gardens. A small but steep hill rose above





Passing through the locks opposite Troy

the center of the town, on which stood a fort, intended (but very ill adapted) for the defence of the place and the neighboring country. From this hill another street was built, sloping pretty rapidly down till it joined the one that ran along the river. This street was still wider than the other, the middle being occupied by public edifices.

“The town, in proportion to its population, occupied a great space of ground. This city, in short, was a kind of semi-rural establishment. Every house had its garden, well and a little green behind. Before every door a tree was planted, rendered interesting by being coeval with some beloved member of the family. Many of the trees were of a prodigious size and extraordinary beauty, but without regularity, everyone planting the kind that best pleased him, or which he thought would afford the most agreeable shade to the open portico at his door, which was surrounded by seats and ascended by a few steps. It was in these that each domestic group was seated in summer evenings to enjoy the balmy twilight or the serenely clear moonlight. Each family had a cow, fed in a common pasture at the end of the town. In the evening the herd returned all

together, of their own accord, with their tinkling bells hung at their necks, along the wide and grassy street, to their wonted sheltering trees, to be milked at their master's doors.

"Nothing could be more pleasing than to see thus, at one view, all the inhabitants of a town, which contained not one very rich or very poor, very knowing or very ignorant, very rude or very polished individual—to see all these children of Nature enjoying in easy indolence or social intercourse,

‘The cool, the fragrant, and the dusky hour’

These primitive beings were dispersed in porches, grouped according to similarity of years and inclinations. At one door were young matrons; at another, the elders of the people; at a third, the youths and maidens, gaily chatting or singing together; while the children played round the trees or waited by the cows for the chief ingredient of their frugal supper, which they generally ate sitting on the steps in the open air.

"At one end of the town, as I observed before, was a common pasture. At the other end was a fertile plain along the river, three miles in length, and near a mile broad. This was divided into lots. There every inhabitant

raised Indian corn sufficient for the food of two or three slaves (the greatest number that each family ever possessed) and for his horses, pigs and poultry. Above the town, a long stretch to the westward was occupied by sandy hills, on which grew bilberries of uncommon size and flavor, in prodigious quantities. Beyond, rise heights of a poor, hungry soil, thinly covered with stunted pines or dwarf oak. Yet in this comparatively barren tract there were several wild and picturesque spots, where small brooks running in deep and rich bottoms, nourished on their banks every vegetable beauty. There some of the most industrious settlers had cleared the luxuriant wood from these charming glens, and built neat cottages for their slaves surrounded with little gardens and orchards. The cottages were occupied in summer by some of the negroes, who cultivated the grounds about them, and served as a place of joyful liberty to the children of the family on holidays.

“The children of the town were all divided into companies, from five or six years of age, till they became marriageable. Every company contained as many boys as girls. A boy or girl of each company, who were older, cleverer, or had some other preëminence above the rest,

were called the heads of the company, and as such were obeyed by the others. The children of different ages in the same family, belonged to different companies. Each company, at a certain time of the year, went in a body to the hill to gather berries. It was a sort of annual festival. Every company had a uniform for this purpose; that is to say, very pretty light baskets made by the Indians, with lids and handles, and were adorned with various colors. One company would never allow the least degree of taste to the other in this instance, and was sure to vent its whole stock of spleen in decrying the rival baskets. Nor would they ever admit that the rival company gathered near so much fruit as they did.

“The girls, from the example of their mothers rather than any compulsion, very early became notably industrious, being constantly employed in knitting stockings, and making clothes for the family and slaves. This was the more necessary as all articles of clothing were extremely dear.

“The children returned the fondness of their parents with such tender affection that they rarely wounded their feelings by neglect or rude answers. Yet the boys were often wilful and

giddy, the girls being sooner tamed and domesticated. These youths were apt, whenever they could carry a gun (which they did at a very early period) to follow some favorite negro to the woods, and while he was employed in felling trees, to range the whole day in search of game, to the neglect of all intellectual improvement.

“Occasionally eight or ten of one company, or related to each other, young men and maidens, would set out together in a canoe on a kind of rural excursion. Yet so fixed were their habits of industry that they never failed to carry their workbaskets with them. They steered a devious course of four, five or perhaps more miles, till they arrived at some of the beautiful islands with which this fine river abounded, or at some sequestered spot on its banks, where delicious wild fruits, or conveniences for fishing afforded some attraction. They generally arrived by nine or ten o'clock, having set out in the cool and early hour of sunrise. A basket with tea, sugar and the other usual provisions for breakfast, a little rum and fruit for making weak punch, and now and then some pastry, were the sole provisions; for the great affair was to depend on the exertions of the boys in pro-

curing fish, wild ducks, etc., for their dinner. With their axes they cleared so much superfluous shrubbery as left a semi-circular opening, above which they bent and twined the boughs so as to form a pleasant bower, while the girls gathered dry branches, which one of the youths set on fire with gunpowder, and the breakfast occupied an hour or two. The young men then set out to fish, or perhaps to shoot birds, and the maidens sat down to their work, singing and conversing with ease and gayety.

“After the sultry hours had been thus employed, the boys brought their tribute from the river or the wood, and a rural meal was prepared by their fair companions, among whom were generally their sisters and the chosen of their hearts. After dinner they all went to gather wild strawberries, or whatever other fruit was in season; for it was accounted a reproach to come home empty handed. When weary of this amusement, they either drank tea in their bower, or returning landed at some friend’s on the way, to partake of that refreshment.

“In winter the river, frozen to a great depth, formed the principal road through the country, and was the scene of skating and sledge races.




A glimpse of canal boat life

The great street of the town, as has been mentioned, sloped down from the hill on which the fort stood, toward the river. Between the buildings was an unpaved carriage road. Every boy and youth in town, from eight to eighteen had a little low sledge with a rope by which one could drag it by hand. On this one or two at most could sit; and the sloping road being made as smooth as glass by sliders' sledges, etc., perhaps a hundred at once set out in succession from the top of the street, each seated on his little sledge, with the rope in his hand. He pushed it off with a little stick, as one would launch a boat, and then with the most astonishing velocity the little machine glided past. What could be so peculiarly delightful in this rapid descent, I could never discover—yet in a more retired place, and on a smaller scale, I have tried the amusement—but to a young Albanian, sleighing, as he called it, was one of the first joys of life, though attended with the necessity of dragging his sledge to the top of the declivity every time he renewed his flight. In managing this little machine some dexterity was necessary. An unskilful phaeton was sure to fall. The vehicle was so low, that a fall was attended with little danger, yet with

much disgrace; for a universal laugh from all sides assailed the fallen charioteer. This laugh was from a very full chorus; for the constant succession of the train, where everyone had a brother, lover or kinsman, brought all the young people in town to the porticos, where they used to sit wrapped in furs till ten or eleven at night, engrossed by the delectable spectacle.

“The young men now and then spent a convivial evening together, where, either to lessen the expense of the supper, or from the love of what they styled frolic, they never failed to steal a roasting pig or a fat turkey for this festive occasion. Swine and turkeys were reared in great numbers by all the town inhabitants. They had an appropriate place for them at the lower end of the garden where they locked them up. It is observable that these animals were the only things locked up about the house, for nothing else ran the least risk of being stolen. The dexterity of the theft consisted in climbing over very high walls, watching to steal in when the negroes went to feed the horse or cow, or making a clandestine entrance at some window or aperture. Breaking doors was quite out of rule, and rarely ever resorted to. These exploits were always per-



formed in the darkest nights. If the owner heard a noise in his stables, he usually ran down with a cudgel, and laid it without mercy on any culprit he could overtake. This was either dexterously avoided or patiently borne. To plunder a man and afterward offer him personal injury was accounted scandalous.

"Marriage was followed by two dreadful privations: a married man could not fly down the street on a little sledge; nor join a party of pig stealers, without outraging decorum. If any of their confederates married very young and were in circumstances to begin house-keeping, they were sure of an early visit of this nature from their old companions. It was thought a great act of gallantry to overtake and chastise the robbers. I recollect an instance of one young married man who had not long attained to that dignity. His turkeys screamed violently one night, he ran down, overtook the aggressors, but finding they were his old associates, he could not resist the force of habit, joined the rest, and shared his own turkey at the tavern.

"There were two inns in the town, the masters of which were 'honorable men;' yet these pigs and turkeys were always received and

dressed without questioning whence they came. In one instance a young party had in this manner provided a pig, and ordered it to be roasted at the King's Arms. Another party attacked the same place whence this booty was taken, but found it already rifled. This party was headed by an idle, mischievous young man, who, well guessing how the stolen roasting pig was disposed of, he ordered his friends to adjourn to the rival tavern, and went himself to the King's Arms. Inquiring in the kitchen, where a pig was roasting, he soon arrived at certainty. Then taking an opportunity when there was no one in the kitchen, he cut the string by which the pig was suspended, laid it in the dripping-pan, and through the quiet and dark streets of that sober city, carried it safely to the other tavern, where, after finishing the roasting, he and his companions prepared to regale themselves.

“Meantime the pig was missed at the King's Arms; and it was immediately concluded who was the author of the trick. A new stratagem was devised to outwit this stealer of the stolen. An adventurous youth of the despoiled party laid down a parcel of shavings opposite the

other tavern, and setting them in a blaze, cried 'Fire!'

"Everyone rushed out of the house just as supper had been served. The dexterous purveyor who had occasioned the disturbance crept in, snatched up the dish with the pig in it, went out again by the back door, and feasted his companions with the recovered spoils."

The country above Albany is threaded with canals—the most graceful and serene of highways, always going around the hills and skirting the slopes in gentle curves, never boisterous by reason of floods or wind, and maintaining themselves just brimming full whether the weather is wet or dry. On one side is the tow-path where the draught creatures toil along, several of them hitched tandem. A long rope trails behind attached to the blunt-nosed craft that moves slowly forward in the middle of the channel, scarcely causing a ripple.

The old men with whom I talked along the course of the canals, did not take a very cheerful view of business on these waterways. They said it was dropping off every year, and the appearance of the canal boats seemed to support the assertion. Their battered dilapidation made it evident that they not only fared hardly

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but were neglected, and that this sort of navigation was on the decline.

The chief outlet of the Erie Canal into the Hudson is opposite Troy. Here is a series of locks, and the boats go up and down this flight of water stairs with surprising ease and celerity. Troy, on the other bank, lines the waterside with great mills, behind which the city rises to a high, tree-embowered hill where several spires thrust through the foliage.

A few miles farther north the Hudson receives the waters of its chief tributary, the Mohawk. On the southern bank of the latter stream is the busy manufacturing town of Cohoes, and at the outskirts of the village the river comes tumbling over some high ragged ledges. The roar of the water dashing itself into foam in its tumultuous fall thrills all the region. From the summit of the lofty canyon wall below the fall the view of the water's white leap and of the tree-fringed river coming from the green country beyond is superb.



The falls on the Mobawk near its junction with the Hudson



XIV

FROM SARATOGA TO THE SOURCE

THE Hudson above tidewater is a lovable pastoral stream, still having considerable breadth and volume of water. In places it is deep and placid, and again flows in swift, shallow rifts, filling the air with clamor as it hurries along over the stones. Up here where the river is not given to loitering and playing see-saw with the tides, its youthful vigor is put to work. Every now and then there is a dam, and the stream turns many a mill-wheel, and in some instances generates electric power for varied uses. Along shore, on either side, is much pleasant, thrifty-looking farming country, until the out-lying foothills of the Adirondacks are reached.

This was a favorite hunting ground of the Indians in the old days, and when they gathered about their evening campfires, they liked to tell stories of adventure in the district, some of which were founded on fact, and others wholly

mythical. One of the most interesting of the legends that have been preserved is the following:

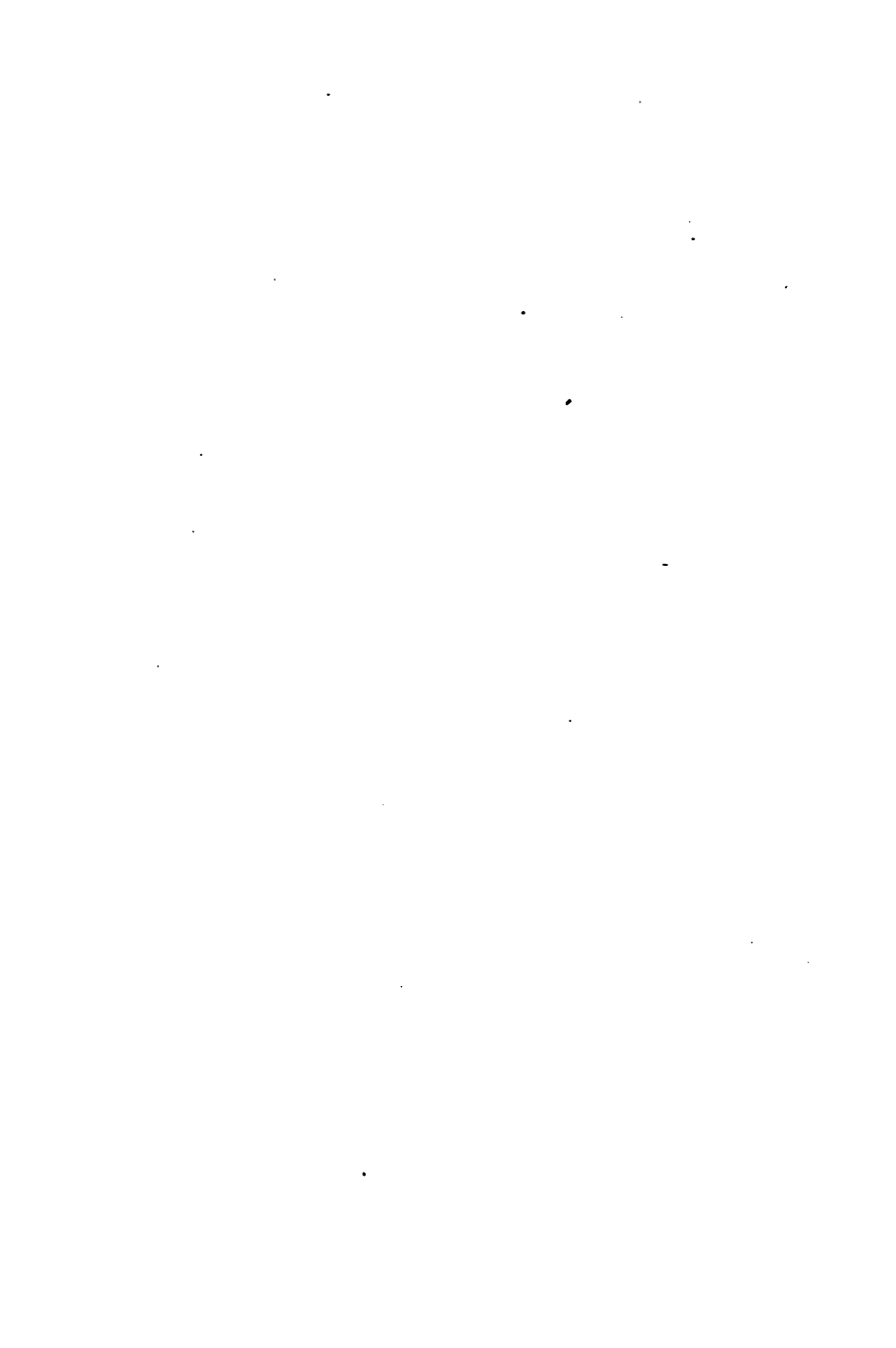
“Late one autumn, when the leaves had nearly all fallen and the snowflakes were beginning to whiten the brown grass of the wild meadows, a young Mohawk brave lost his way somewhere in the vicinity of the modern Saratoga. In vain he wandered day after day, and he recalled with dread the belief of his tribe that a lost person is led by some evil spirit round and round in an ever-narrowing circle at whose center is death. Finally, when almost starved, and in despair, a large gray owl, seemingly emboldened by the gathering shades of the night which was near, flew across his path on noiseless wings and alighted on a low limb of a storm-blasted hemlock. Then, turning its big staring eyes on the sufferer it said derisively, ‘To whoo! to whoo! It is I who have bound thee in my spell. It is I who have wound thee round and round the charmed circle. It is I who, with my wife and children in yonder hollow tree, will fatten off thy flesh. To whoo! To whoo! It is time for thee to die! To whoo! To whoo!’

“But the youthful Mohawk, summoning his remaining strength raised his bow with trembling arm and let fly an arrow which brought the monster fluttering lifeless to the ground. While the Indian, exhausted by his effort, leaned against a tree looking at the dead bird there flew forth from its body a beautiful white dove. Immediately the lowering clouds which had covered the sky broke away and the full round moon rose serenely in the east. The dove hovered before the young hunter as if inviting him to follow it. He heeded its apparent intentions and it fluttered along before him till it led him to safety.”

Saratoga was a resort of the Indians long before the whites came to this country, and the peculiar virtues of its springs were celebrated far and wide. One spring, as it originally existed, had built for itself a curb about four feet high, and was spoken of by the Indians as the “High Rock” or “Great Medicine Spring.” In 1767, as a mark of special friendship, they revealed the spring to Sir William Johnson of the Mohawk Valley. He had been wounded at the battle of Lake George, twelve years before, and was subject to recurring attacks of illness, due to that injury. The Mo-

hawks, who held him in greater esteem than they ever felt for any other white man, carried him through the forest to the "High Rock Spring," and laid him in the healing pool with solemn ceremonies. "The water has almost effected my cure," he wrote afterward. Indeed, he came to the spring on a litter carried by his Mohawk friends, but was so far restored that he accomplished part of his return journey to Schenectady on foot.

In 1783 General Schuyler made a road through the woods to the spring from his home on the Hudson a few miles to the east, and with his family camped beside the medicinal waters for several weeks. That same year, General Washington, while making a tour through the northern part of the state visited the spring in company with Alexander Hamilton. The efficacy of the water soon became "much celebrated as well as the curious round and hollow rock from which it flowed." The country between the Hudson and Saratoga, as described by a member of a party that visited the springs in 1789, "was very uninviting and almost uninhabited. The road lay through a forest and was formed of logs. We travelled till the last light had disappeared. At length





Saratoga's vernal business center

we heard the barking of a dog and found our way to a log house, containing but one room and destitute of everything except hospitable inhabitants. There was no lamp or candles, light being supplied by pine knots stuck in crevices in the walls. The conversation of the family proved that wild beasts were very numerous and bold in the surrounding forests, and that they sometimes, when hungry, approached the house.

“On reaching the springs at Saratoga we found but three habitations, and those poor log houses near the Round Rock. This was the only spring then visited. The log cabins were full of strangers and we found it almost impossible to obtain accommodations even for two nights. The neighborhood of the spring, like all the country we had seen for many miles, was a perfect forest.”

Yet within a few decades Saratoga Springs became one of the greatest watering places on earth, having all the charm that wealth and fashion could confer added to its natural attractions. Those who have lodged in its great hostelrys and drank of its waters, no doubt include a very large proportion of the famous people of the last century. In ante-

bellum days Saratoga was the favorite resort of rich Southerners, and this fact accounts for some of its peculiar customs and attractions. The permanent population of the town is about twelve thousand, but at the height of the summer season there are often in the place two or three times that number. About thirty different springs exist, none of them, however, in a state of nature, but each sheltered by a more or less elaborate building. They are all strongly impregnated with carbonic acid gas, but present considerable variation otherwise. Most of them are declared to be pleasant to drink, though this claim is not made for those having the greatest medicinal reputation; for a nauseous taste is very apt to inspire faith in such matters. The waters are considered especially beneficial to the stomach and liver, and in cases of rheumatism, calculus and similar disorders.

In 1871 while drilling in the solid rock a vein of limestone was struck at a depth of one hundred and forty feet from which the water immediately spouted to the surface and thirty feet into the air from an inch nozzle. Many of the other springs were very vigorous in their flow, but in recent years they have dwindled, the spouters have ceased to spout and some have

stopped flowing altogether. This is due to operations on the outskirts of the town where the carbonic gas has of late been pumped from the earth for commercial purposes. The pumping stations, each with lines of pipe running to several scattered wells all worked by the same engine, remind one of the oil regions. They have hurt Saratoga as a health resort, but the state is about to buy them out and the springs are to be restored to their pristine virtue.

At one of the springs I made the acquaintance of a man in charge who had both the leisure and the inclination to talk. I had wandered into the building to try the water and for five cents was furnished with an unlimited quantity, but I did not relish it enough to want to absorb very much. The caretaker urged me to imbibe more freely, and when I voiced a preference for ordinary water that was pure and tasteless, he affirmed that he liked this as well as any water. But his nose had a bloom which seemingly indicated that his experience as a water drinker was limited, and that a more fiery liquid was his favorite beverage. According to him the famous springs were not the chief source of Saratoga's past prosperity. The great attraction was gambling at its race track. Gambling

in the state had, however, recently been outlawed, largely through the efforts of Governor Hughes, "and now," said my acquaintance, "this town is on the bum. We shall have races just as in the past, but people don't want to see a horse race. They come here for the betting. I don't gamble myself; but it is gambling on horse races that have made Saratoga. We want the sporting element, and that went elsewhere when the Governor shut off betting. We used to make enough in five weeks to carry us through the rest of the year; but last season was a bad one. I had to draw on my savings, and trade was so poor the merchants were all hard up. There wasn't half of them in such shape they could go to the banks and borrow any money. The farmers are hit, too. They come in with their vegetables and things, and the people they usually sell to say, 'No, we don't want any. We haven't got the money to pay for 'em.' It's a shame. I don't care what the ministers say. I'm a Christian, but they can talk religion all they blame please; they can't dictate to me in a matter that touches my pocket. I ain't got no use for the Governor either. I've always been a Republican, but Hughes don't get my

vote. Since he signed that anti-gambling bill there's lots of us in this county who belong to his party and yet are doing all we can to kill him when it comes to an election. He may be all right, but he ain't all right for Saratoga."

It did not seem to me that my informant was very much of an ornament to the Christianity he professed, or that he was an asset the Republican party would be likely to boast of very loudly. If the town has fattened on the vices of its visitors, the sooner it seeks, either of its own free will or by compulsion, some new basis of prosperity, the better.

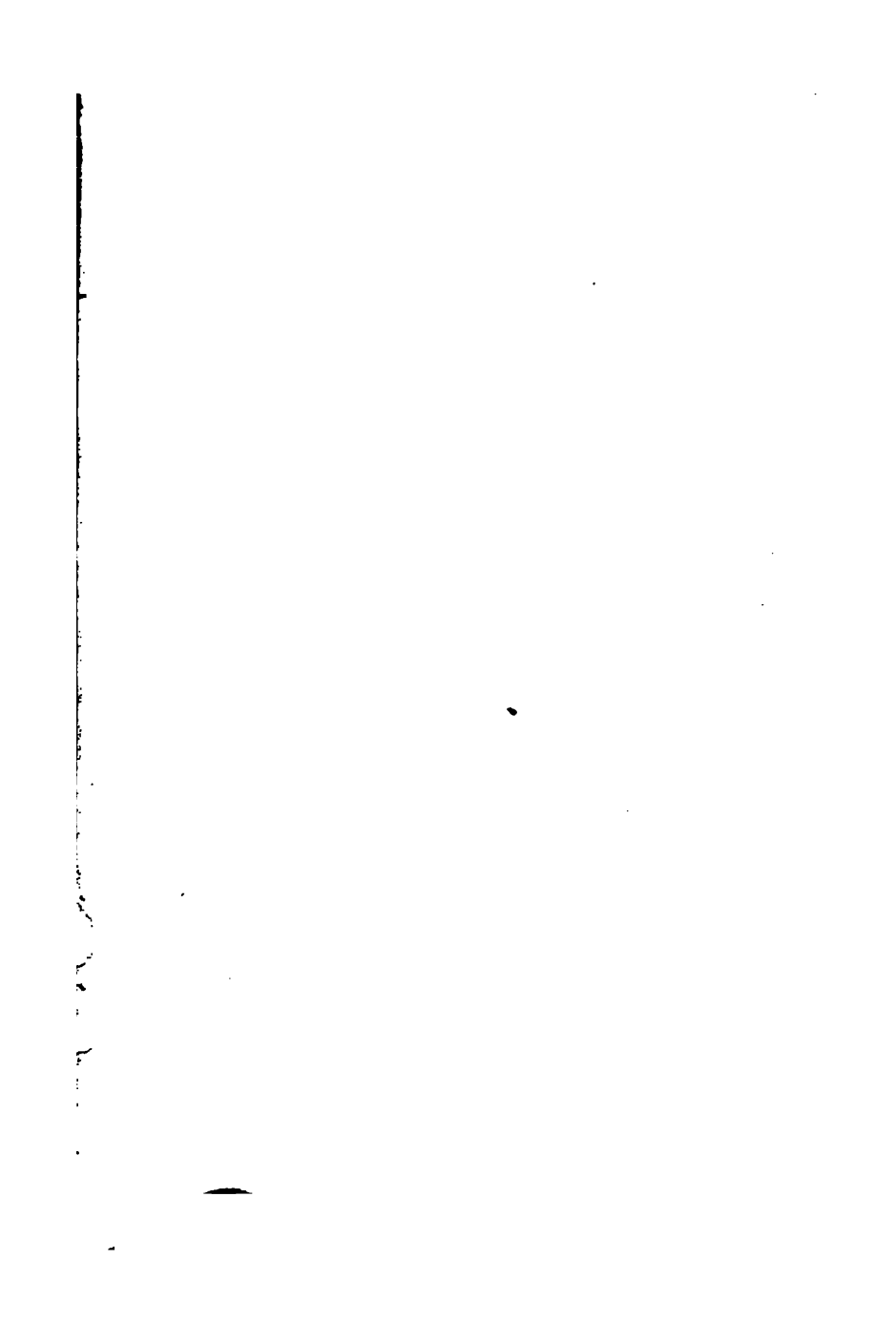
The place has a distinct individuality and its principal street, shaded by fine elms for a distance of three miles, and kept in perfect order, is one of the most beautiful in the United States. This thoroughfare retains its vernal character in the business as well as the residence section. Hotels abound in the town, and many of these are very large and were palatial in their day, but look tawdry now in their ornate type of architecture. Still, in spite of their pretensions, they have a flavor of the past that is not unpleasing.

The region is historically one of the most notable in America, and the battle of Saratoga,

which led to the surrender of Burgoyne, is numbered among the "fifteen decisive battles of the world." Burgoyne started from Canada with the expectation of uniting his forces with an army that was to ascend the Hudson from New York; but in 1777 the roads of northern and central New York were few and bad. Except in the immediate vicinity of Albany and Saratoga, the country was covered with the primeval forest, through which only the trapper and the Indian could make their way with speed. Here it was that Burgoyne came to grief. His advance from Canada up Lake Champlain and his capture of Fort Ticonderoga had been easily accomplished, and there was rejoicing in England and consternation in America. The patriot army was at Fort Edward, only twenty miles from the head of the lake, and it would apparently be an easy prey to the victorious British; but Schuyler, its commander, had been industriously at work with axe and crowbar, and the pioneer roads, bad at their best, were obstructed every few steps by the huge trunks and tangled branches of trees that had been felled across them. The bridges, too, were all destroyed, and Burgoyne could only push forward about a mile a day.



The site of Burgoyne's Surrender



When he at last arrived at Fort Edward, the Americans had fallen back to Stillwater on the west bank of the river and were about as far away as they had been before. Meanwhile the militia of New York and New England were beating to arms and Schuyler's force was constantly growing by motley additions from every direction, each soldier having on the clothes he wore in the fields, the church or the tavern.

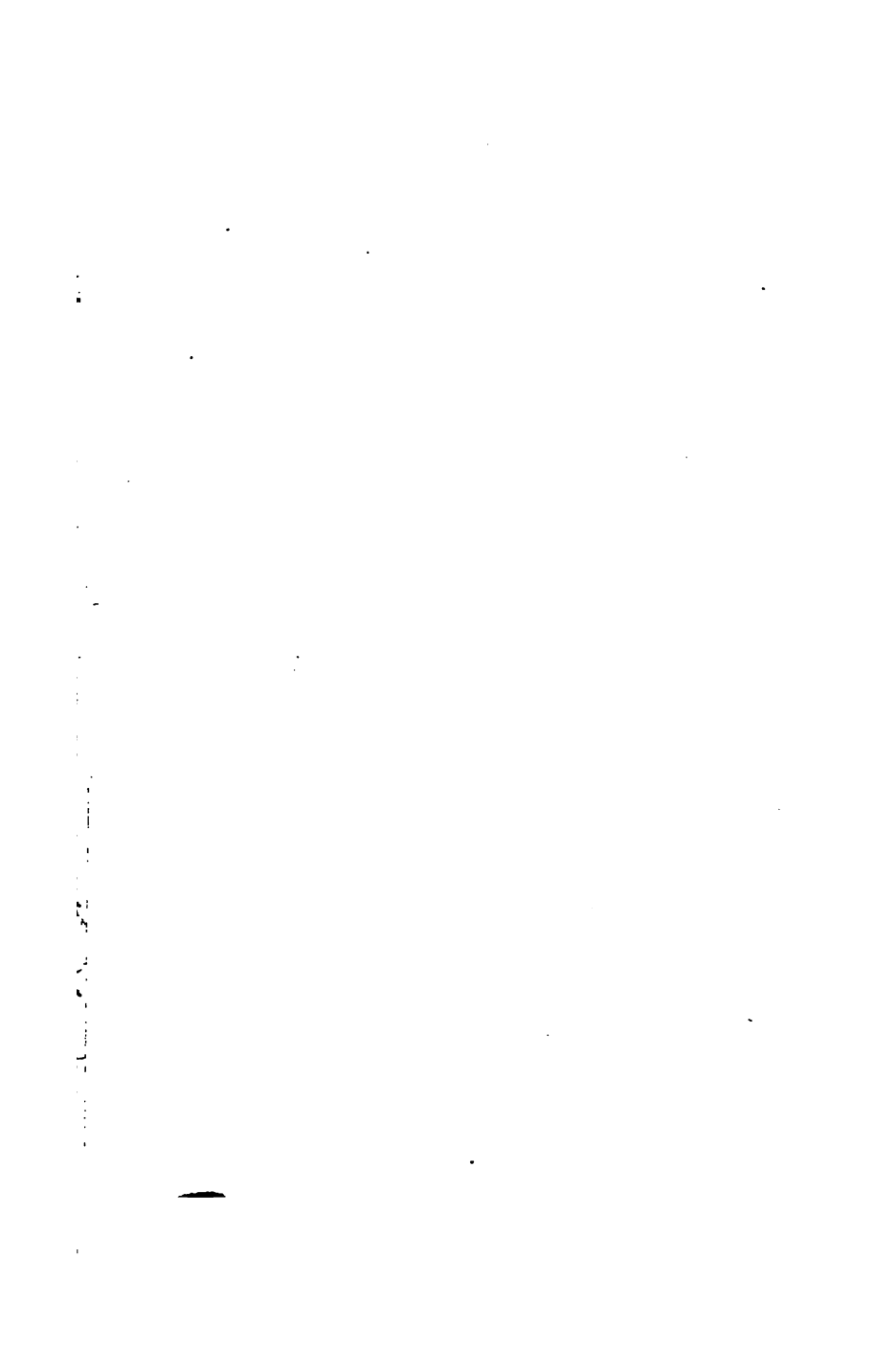
Burgoyne was expecting much help from the loyalist inhabitants of the region he was invading; but in this he was disappointed. The people withdrew as he advanced driving their cattle before them. The support that he might possibly have had under other circumstances was largely alienated by his employment of Indian auxiliaries. To be sure, he had explained to his savage allies that the slaughter of aged men, and of women and children and unresisting prisoners was absolutely forbidden, and that on no account were scalps to be taken from wounded or dying men; but these injunctions had slight effect. One sad tragedy for which the Indians were responsible and which was long treasured in song and story roused the public wrath against the invaders, far and wide. Jane McCrea, the beautiful daughter of a New

Jersey clergyman, was at Fort Edward visiting her friend, Mrs. McNeil. One morning a party of Indians burst into the house and carried away the two ladies. Some American soldiers pursued the savages who scattered and escaped. They presently came into the British camp with only Mrs. McNeil, but the next day a famous sachem, known as the Wyandot Panther, appeared with a scalp of long, silky, black tresses. It was Jane McCrea's. A search was made, and the body of the girl was found near a spring in the forest pierced by three bullet wounds. How she came to her death was never known, but a version of the story, widely accepted at the time ran in this wise:

She was betrothed to David Jones, a loyalist, who was serving as lieutenant in Burgoyne's army. Her lover sent a letter to her by a party of Indians entreating her to come to the British camp where they would be married. Before these Indians reached the McNeil house another company of savages under the Wyandot Panther raided it and carried off Jane and Mrs. McNeil. Soon afterward the two parties met near the spring, and the emissaries of David Jones insisted on taking Jane with them. High words



Glen's Falls



ensued until the Panther, in a rage, drew his pistol and shot the girl dead.

Burgoyne was a man of quick and tender sympathy, and the fate of the young lady grieved him greatly. He made the rule that thereafter no party of Indians should be allowed to go marauding save under the lead of some British officer, who might watch and restrain them. The savages showed their disaffection at once. They grunted and growled for two or three days, and then with hoarse yells and hoots, the whole five hundred scampered off to the Adirondack wilderness. This desertion deprived the invaders of valuable scouts and guides, and by no means effaced the desire for vengeance which their deeds had aroused among the American yeomanry for a hundred miles round about.

At length Burgoyne's army began to suffer for lack of food, and there were not horses enough to drag their cannon and carry the provision bags. Something must be done, and Burgoyne got his force over to the west side of the Hudson on a bridge of boats. Then he moved forward to attack the Americans who had taken up a strong position on Bemis Heights. General Gates was now the patriot commander,

having superseded the far abler Schuyler. American scouts concealed in the upper foliage of the tall trees that grew on the hillsides were early aware of the British movements, and the fiery Arnold begged to be allowed to go forth and assail the enemy. When Gates gave reluctant consent, Arnold with three thousand men fell on Burgoyne's advance at Freeman's Farm. He was outnumbered and sent for reinforcements, but these were refused. Nevertheless he held his own in a desperate fight for two hours until darkness put an end to the struggle; and all this while the incompetent Gates kept idle on Bemis Heights eleven thousand men, nor did he on the next day follow up the advantage Arnold had gained. Nothing more was done for nearly three weeks, and Gates in the despatches sent to Congress took to himself all the credit of this preliminary encounter, and did not even mention Arnold's name.

Meanwhile Burgoyne was hoping for relief from Sir Henry Clinton who was to bring an army up the Hudson. But conditions were fast becoming desperate, and he again attempted to sweep aside his foes. An advance column failed in its attack, lost its cannon, and

became disordered. At this moment Arnold, who had been watching from the heights, sprang on his horse and galloped to the scene of action. Gates sent Major Armstrong to stop him, exclaiming, "Call back that fellow, or he will be doing something rash!"

But Arnold was too swift for the pursuing messenger. The men greeted their beloved commander with deafening hurrahs and he directed them against the retreating column of the enemy, and when that column had been crushed they assailed other vulnerable points of the invader's army. The American victory, complete and decisive, had been practically won when a wounded German soldier lying on the ground took aim at Arnold. The bullet passed through the general's left leg and slew his horse. As he fell, one of his men rushed toward the wounded soldier, and would have bayoneted him had not Arnold hastily ordered his would-be avenger to desist. So the poor soldier was saved, and it has been well said that "this was the hour when Benedict Arnold should have died."

On the morrow Burgoyne retreated northward a few miles with his wrecked army, and Gates, who now outnumbered him three to one,

closed in on him. A brisk cannonade was opened on the beaten invaders, and they were harassed with the galling fire of the sharpshooters. Drinking water became scant, and every man that started with a bucket for the river was shot dead. So the wife of a soldier courageously volunteered to go; and she brought water again and again, for the Americans would not fire at a woman.

The end came on October seventeenth, when Burgoyne surrendered. It was agreed that the captured army should be sent home, but Congress, with inexcusable lack of honor, did not keep the pledge, and the main body of the troops were after a time transferred to Virginia. They were not guarded very rigorously, and some were allowed to escape, and the rest scattered and for the most part eventually became American citizens.

The place of Burgoyne's surrender is marked by a tall granite shaft. It is on a hillcrest that overlooks a long steep slope, descending to the river in the hollow. Beyond the stream are lines of undulating hills that melt gradually into ridges of hazy blue on the horizon. The river here is very modest and mild. You can toss a stone across it, and it slumbers between banks



Lake George from the old earthworks of Fort William Henry

where the great trees with their wide-spreading branches lean caressingly over it.

For many miles above it has as a rule the same lazy tree-embowered character. At length we come to Fort Edward. The fort, which was of considerable importance in the French and Indian wars, has long ago disappeared. Within the confines of the present village Jane McCrea met her lamented death, and Fort Edward was the scene of the well-known exploit of Israel Putnam, who stood on the roof of the powder magazine and saved it after a strenuous single-handed fight with the fire that consumed the structure next to it.

A few miles more and we arrive at Glen's Falls. Here is a thriving modern manufacturing town. The center of interest for the stranger is not, however, the substantial business section, or the great mills, but a rocky islet in the middle of the river just below where the stream begins a chaotic tumble of seventy-two feet down a tangle of steep ledges. On this spot occurred some of the most thrilling incidents in one of the world-famous romances of J. Fenimore Cooper—"The Last of the Mohicans." Unfortunately an ugly iron bridge runs directly across the island, which supports one of the bridge piers.

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It would seem that this disfigurement might have been avoided. Even if the attraction of the island is largely one of sentiment, the interest it arouses has a real value to the town and to the country at large. The island is merely a bare rock swept by the floods, but on its higher portion are some clumps of bushes and a little grass. At one point is a small cave opening back into the rock, and this is the supposed retreat of Hawkeye and his companions when pursued by the savages.

The name of the falls is altogether lacking in inspiration. By the Indians this leap of the Hudson over the rugged rocks was called Che-pon-tuc —“a hard place to get around.” When the whites began to settle in the region the falls became the property of a man named Wing and were known at Wing’s Falls. That they have not come down to posterity so designated is due to the fact that he sold the right to the name to a Mr. Glen for the price of a dinner at the tavern. The latter, after he had paid for the repast, posted all the roads around with handbills announcing the change in name.

At Glen’s Falls it is natural to turn aside from the river to visit Lake George. The lake is a beautiful, irregular sheet of water, com-

paratively narrow, but more than thirty miles long, with many a wooded guardian height rising from its borders. Its attractiveness is much increased by its numerous islands. These are said to be the same in number as the days of the year, and on leap years an extra one can be found to match the extra day. At the southern end the old embankments of Fort William Henry can still be traced, and other forts of the Colonial period in the region survive in similar half-effaced hillocks.

The most notable battle fought on its shores dates back to 1755. An expedition under General Johnson, afterward Sir William Johnson, on its way to attack the French on Lake Champlain had encamped at its southern extremity among the stumps of newly-felled trees. The troops were from the farms and brought their own guns. They had no bayonets, but carried hatchets in their belts, and by their sides were slung powder-horns on which, in their leisure they carved quaint devices with the points of their jack-knives. There were twenty-two hundred effective men and they were presently joined by three hundred Mohawks. As to the manners and morals of the army one of the officers wrote that nothing was to be heard

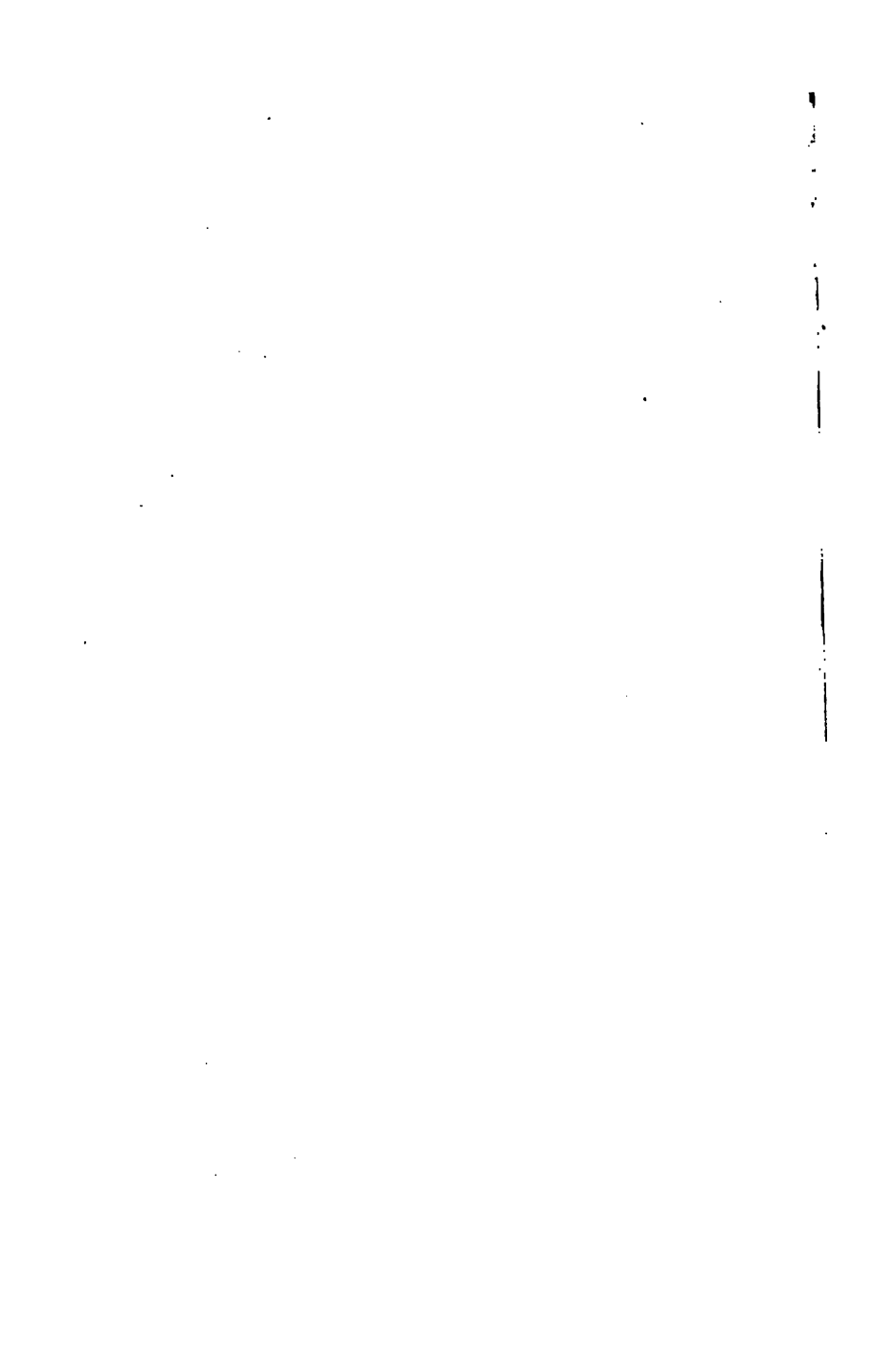
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“among a great part of them but the language of hell;” yet it was said that not a chicken had been stolen on their march, and they now had sermons twice a week, daily prayers and frequent psalm-singing.

The French commander, Baron Dieskau, did not wait for them to assail him, but made a circuit and gained their rear with a force of fifteen hundred, most of whom were Canadians and Indians. Late on the night of September seventh tidings of this movement reached Johnson, and at sunrise a thousand men were detailed to reconnoitre, and two hundred Mohawk warriors went with them. An hour elapsed, when from the distance was heard a sudden explosion of musketry. In the thick woods bordering the narrow, newly-cut road which led southward from Lake George, the French had concealed themselves, and the English were first apprised of their danger, by an appalling shout which rose from both sides of them and was followed by a storm of bullets. The road was soon strewn with dead and wounded soldiers, and the English gave way. Every man was a woodsman and a hunter, and the greater part of them spread through the forest fighting stubbornly as they retreated, and shooting from behind



A village on the borders of the Adirondacks



every tree or bush that could afford a cover. The Canadians and Indians and French regulars pressed them closely, and far and wide through the forest rang shout and shriek and the deadly rattle of guns.

Warned by the approaching sound of the conflict, the soldiers in the camp made a sort of barricade along its front, partly of wagons, and partly of inverted bateaux, but chiefly of the trunks of trees hastily hewn down in the neighboring forest and laid end to end in a single row. The defeated party began to come in; first scared fugitives, then gangs of men bringing the wounded, and at last the main detachment.

A portion of the troops were detailed to guard the flanks of the camp and the rest stood just back of the wagons or lay flat behind the logs and bateaux. They were hardly at their posts when they saw ranks of soldiers moving down the road, and heard a terrific burst of war-whoops. Some of the men grew uneasy; but the chief officers, sword in hand, threatened instant death to any who should stir from their posts. If Dieskau could have made an assault then there would have been little doubt of his success. But, except for the regulars, the

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members of his force were beyond his control and had scattered through the woods and swamps, shouting and firing from behind trees. The fight continued from noon until after four o'clock, when the French showed signs of wavering. At this, with a general shout, the English broke from their camp and rushed on their enemies, striking them down or putting them to frightened flight through the woods.

Some time previous, several hundred of the Canadians and Indians had left the field and returned to the scene of the morning fight to plunder and scalp the dead. They were resting themselves, and night had begun to gloom the forest, when a scouting party from Fort Edward sent a volley of bullets among them. The assailants were greatly outnumbered, but they soon had totally routed and dispersed the enemy. Near where this combat occurred is a pond half overgrown by weeds and water lilies and darkened by the surrounding forest, beneath whose stagnant waters the bodies of those slain are said to lie buried deep in mud and slime.

Baron Dieskau had been wounded and taken prisoner. He was carried to the tent of General Johnson, and scarcely had his wounds been dressed when several of the Mohawks came in,

furious at their losses. There was a long and angry dispute between them and Johnson in their own language, after which they went out very sullenly. Dieskau asked what they wanted.

"They wanted to burn you, eat you, and smoke you in their pipes, in revenge for three or four of their chiefs that were killed," replied Johnson. "But never fear. You shall be safe with me, or else they shall kill us both."

As soon as his wounds would permit Dieskau was carried on a litter, strongly escorted, to Fort Edward, and from there went on to New York, and later was sent to England.

Around Lake George the fighting continued for years, and the vicinity was the scene of ceaseless ambuscades and forest skirmishing. Fort William Henry had been built at the southern end of Lake George close to the edge of the water, and in August, 1757, Montcalm, with a force of eight thousand men, about one-fourth of whom were Indians, laid siege to it. The fort was formed by embankments of gravel surmounted by a rampart of heavy logs, and east of it, on a low rocky hill, beyond a marsh, was an entrenched camp. All around and far up the slopes of the western mountain, the forest had been cut down and burned and

the ground was cumbered with blackened stumps and charred trunks and branches of fallen trees. The garrison, which numbered a little more than two thousand, made a brave defence, but in a few days their position became deplorable. More than three hundred of them had been killed and wounded, and small-pox was raging in the fort. There was nothing to do but capitulate and it was agreed that they should march out with the honors of war and be escorted the day following by a guard of French troops to Fort Edward. No sooner did the garrison leave the fort than a crowd of Indians clambered through the embrasures in search of rum and plunder; and all the sick men unable to leave their beds were instantly butchered.

The English had collected in the entrenched camp which had been included in the surrender. Presently the Indians resorted thither, and their intrusive insolence made the women and children half crazy with fright. There was much disorder, and Montcalm hurried to the camp and did his utmost to restore tranquility. At last night came, and in the morning the English, in their haste to be gone, got together at daybreak. The Indians had been prowling





A millpond among the hills

about the outskirts of the camp since midnight, and they were now all on the alert, and began plundering. They demanded rum, and some of the soldiers, afraid to refuse, gave it to them from their canteens. After much difficulty the column at last got out of the camp and began to move along the road toward the forest. Then the Indians abandoned all restraint, and snatched caps, coats and weapons from the men, tomahawking those who resisted, and dragged off shrieking women and children, or murdered them on the spot. Into the midst of this frightful tumult came Montcalm and other French officers, and by promises and threats tried to allay the frenzy of the savages. "Kill me, but spare the English who are under my protection!" Montcalm exclaimed.

The English had muskets, but no ammunition, and any effective resistance was impossible. Many were killed and many more were carried away by the Indians, who, the morning after the massacre set out for Canada. The rest were guarded in the entrenched camp for a number of days and then escorted to Fort Edward. Meanwhile Fort William Henry had been demolished, and the barracks torn down. The huge pine logs of the rampart were now

thrown into a heap and set on fire. Then the army reëmbarked, and no living thing was left amid the desolation, except the wolves that gathered from the mountains to feast on the dead.

In continuing up the Hudson from Glen's Falls one finds the stream largely utilized as a highway for floating down logs. These come from the mountains in immense numbers every spring, and after the main drive is past the shores are strewn with numberless stragglers, and many more are lodged on rocks in midstream. The country grows increasingly rustic, and the villages usually consist of a hotel, a few wooden stores, and a group of houses where taking summer boarders is the main business. The railroad ends at North Creek, and if you would go farther and explore the woods and mountains, the lakes and wild streams of the Adirondacks, you must continue by stage or on foot. There are numerous teams on the road and their occupants are a friendly people, always with a nod and often a companionable greeting for you, even though you are a total stranger. Most of the houses outside of the villages are small and barren, and there is an occasional one of logs with a genuine pioneer aspect.

They are often in the midst of a landscape that has great charm in its mighty hills and river vistas, but the buildings themselves are usually unprepossessing, and uncaressed by Nature's greenery.

The Hudson rises in the recesses of the mountains where the source of its chief branch is a little lake poetically called "The Tear of the Clouds," over four thousand feet above the tide. This is the loftiest body of water in the state from which a stream flows continuously. It is eighty yards long by about thirty wide, very shallow, with a bottom of soft black mud that makes its clear water look like ink. Dwarfed spruces abound along the shores, and here and there rounded boulders lift themselves above the surface. A climb of one thousand feet more takes one to the summit of the proudest height in the Adirondacks, Mount Marcy, which the Indians called Jahawnus—the cloud-piercer. From the Tear of the Clouds flows Feldspar Brook through a narrow mountain gorge. This, after gathering volume from tributary streams, takes the name of Opalescent River, and still later becomes the East Branch of the Hudson.

Nature has covered the high places at the headwaters of the river with a dense growth of evergreens, whose roots hold the forest mold where it has slowly gathered in the passing centuries. This forest mold, composed largely of decayed leaves and cones, branches and fallen tree trunks, is generally called "spruce-duff," because among the spruces the deposit is deepest. Together with the rank moss that grows so abundantly in the shade, it is equal to a sponge for absorbing water and is an almost perfect medium for regulating the flow of precipitated moisture. Cut away the trees and expose the mold to the sun, and it soon dies and becomes fit food for fire. Only a careless spark is needed, and then the fire sweeps the surface and smoulders in the fibrous mold until it is entirely consumed. After that the first storm carries away the ashes, leaving only the naked rock, and the work of a thousand years has been undone.

Just how much harm this sort of devastation does to the watershed of the Hudson as a whole is uncertain, but any damage at the headwaters affects to some degree all the rest of the valley. It is greatly to be hoped that the

annual fires which sweep over such vast tracts of northern woodland will be better curbed in the future and that the Hudson will remain for unnumbered centuries the same beautiful stream it has been in the past.



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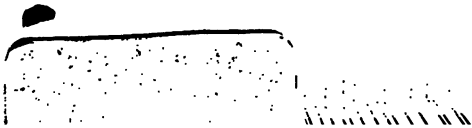
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